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WHO ARE THESE AMERICANS?

By Paul B. Sears

ILLUSTRATED
By THE AUTHOR

THE PEOPLES LIBRARY

New York · 1939

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Dedicated to

OKLAHOMA

The abode of gracious friends,
and for ten years
my cherished home and workshop.

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CHAPTER I

LOST IN AMERICA

MILLIONS of Americans today seem lost, uncertain, insecure. It is easy to get lost in a crowd. A man may say:

"I am only one of millions. What can I do to make the United States a better place to live in? Nothing I say will help. My one vote will make no difference. What, anyhow, is the good of trying?"



That man is lonely and afraid. He cannot believe in himself or his fellows. He is like one thrown among strangers, lost and unsure because he has not yet taken the measure of his surroundings. In truth, he, like many of the rest of us, has not quite sized up his fellow Americans.

To add to our confusion, we are changing the world around us too rapidly to do a good job of it. We are like men tearing down an old building faster than we

can move the bricks away, and trying to build a new one in its place without taking time to secure the foundations and to allow the cement to set solidly.

We have come to worship the giant rolling-mill and forget that it is the creation of man and should be his servant. We trust the adding machine and disregard the brain which made it possible. We use the laws we have learned from nature to try outwitting nature, when we should be learning better how to live with her. We see a world in arms, and men in their panic mistrusting one another, turning in their desperation toward the loudest voice.

These things do not need to be. It is a point of sober truth that every individual who lives in the world changes it somewhat by his presence. Each human being most assuredly should count for something.

We have learned a great deal about the world around us, both by costly blind experience and by the aid of science. But we still have much to learn about man himself—that is, about you and me and all of us together. Here and there, peering through glasses which are still dim and with eyes none too certain, the scientists see glints of possibilities in most of us, far beyond anything we dream of. You and I are something worth believing in—certainly as good a risk as the rusty iron ore out of which science has created modern ships and buildings and delicate machines.

You can stand on the street corner and hear a speaker shout, "All men are equal!" This declaration

means just what you want it to mean, and the speaker knows that. But it will not give to you the power and control of a big-league pitcher over your right arm—unless you happen to have it already. And it will not give the pitcher your delicate ear for music, or some other quality which you may have and he does not. The speaker can talk until he is blue in the face, and it will not give one man the kind of parents he lacked or another the good education he could not afford.

You can drop down the street a block or two and step into a meeting where someone else is talking.

“Most men are stupid fools, not fit to govern themselves,” he will be saying. “Other races are inferior to ours and cannot be trusted. We must rule them, and in turn we must be ruled by the very few of our own number who are best fitted to lead.”

A person may quote from science to lend support to such statements. For it is true that the science of heredity shows us that men, like other living creatures, are born with very different capacities. But that is not the whole story. The sciences which deal with the growth of man's body, his mind and the communities in which he lives, are finding that much can be done to modify and in some ways control the kind of individual a man becomes, no matter what capacities he may inherit. There is need, moreover, in a human world as varied as ours, for people to be different.

We need, therefore, to take the truths of many sciences into account before we make up our minds about what people are or are not, and what will be

best for them. We need to go on gathering more and more evidence about ourselves; the ways in which we are alike and those in which we differ; what qualities and tendencies men are born with; and how such inheritance may be shaped and guided by experience and surroundings.

Of these things we already know something—much more indeed than we are using. This is the kind of knowledge an American needs to keep from being confused by the shouting—to keep from being lost in the crowd. He needs it, and much besides, to understand his job as a human being and a citizen.

Each of us, we may be assured, has a share in making the world a better place to live. But the time is past when we can do our part by following blind tradition. We must, to the best of our abilities, know what we are about.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS AMERICA?

SUCH simple questions as the title of this chapter are surprising. They look so easy, until you stop guessing and try to answer thoughtfully and scientifically. We can, however, get one thing out of the way at the start. By America we mean the United States of North America. Our Canadian and Mexican friends, who together own more of North America than we do, have just about decided to let us go ahead and call our country America if we insist.

But when you have a name hitched to something, that is just a beginning. Stroll down the village street and ask several different people about one of their fellow citizens, Mr. John Jones. Banker, preacher, boss, physician, enemy, friend—each will give you his notion of the man, and different notions they will be. The more powerful and important a person you are asking about, the more varied the responses you may get. But his name is still John Jones.

Now what is America?

Here is one kind of answer. "The United States is that part of the continent of North America which is bounded on the north by the Dominion of Canada, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the south by the Gulf and Republic of Mexico, on the west by the Pacific Ocean."

Also—"a federal republic of forty-eight states, two territories (Alaska and Hawaii) and the District of Columbia."

And—"a world power of the first rank in natural resources, finance, military and naval strength, having a population of about 130,000,000 people and an area of 3,624,122 square miles, lying mostly in the north temperate zone of the western hemisphere."

All of which, however dry it may sound, is unquestionably true. But these answers leave out some pretty important matters. They give no light on your chances of living happily in that country, or of having it deal fairly with you. Suppose we gather a few more definitions.

The United States is—"the land of the free and the home of the brave." It is—"a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created free and equal." It is—"the land of opportunity."

It is Uncle Sam, Brother Jonathan, the Big Brother, the Good Neighbor.

Or is it? From another set of voices come such words as these: The United States is—"one of the so-called democracies." It is—"a capitalistic bourgeois center of reaction," "a land of sentimentalists and hypocrites." It is not the Big Brother or Good Neighbor but "Old Moneybags."

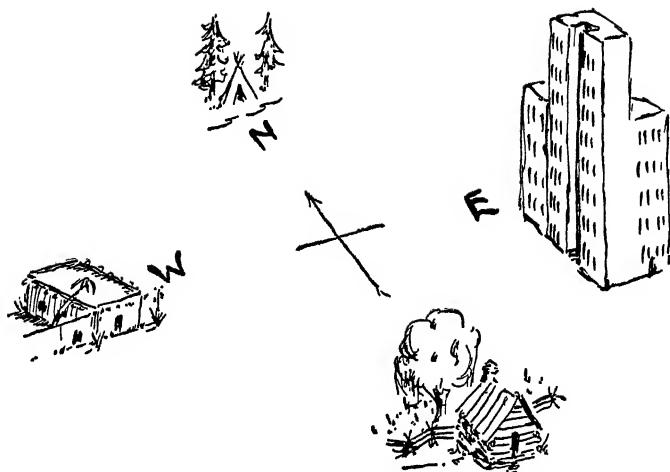
If we look back over these descriptions and quotations, we see that some of them refer to the territory and organization of the country—matters about which

it is easy to agree. The others refer to the people, the spirit, the policies—all matters about which agreement is not easy. Not all the wise and honest words in the world are spoken by one's friends. Sometimes our enemies speak the truth, however unpleasant such a thought may be.

Clearly enough, the United States is something more than a certain part of the earth's surface. It is something more than a certain number of human beings who live in that part of the earth. It is something more than a form of government, for governments can be alike in name and very different in action.

France is a republic, too. But she gets her laws from Roman sources; our laws were borrowed from England. Her central government has full authority over the whole French nation; ours must share authority with forty-eight state governments. The Republic of China is governed, at the present time, by a dictator. The Republic of Mexico is different still.

To add to the difficulty of saying what it is, our country is by no means uniform throughout. You can buy a new suit by looking at a small sample, for you know that the rest of the cloth will be just like it in color, material, weight, and weave. But you cannot be so sure about the United States from sampling a small part of it. This is very hard for foreign writers and lecturers to understand, to say nothing of a good many Americans who boast that the United States is an open book to them.



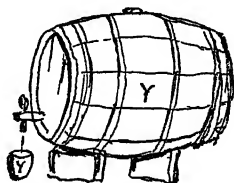
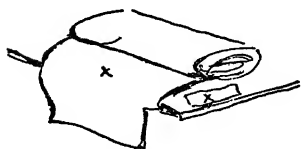
So far as the physical landscape is concerned, what is typically American? The green, rounded hills of New England and its elm-lined streets? The flat sandy plains of the southeast, covered with pines, live oaks, Spanish moss, and magnolias? The fertile, rolling Mississippi valley? The high plains, sierras, Great Salt Lake, Arizona desert? Or the rocky coast and lush forests of Oregon? Nor must we forget Niagara Falls, Old Faithful Geyser, and the big trees. Where shall we take the sample?

The same problem arises with the people. How find the typical American? There is a world's choice of skin color, physical build, ancestry, wealth, occupation, social position, religion, and everything else that

goes to make the human being. In New Mexico, about every other person is a farmer; in New Jersey, only about two out of each hundred. Living in New Mexico, the chances are four times greater than in New Jersey that a person has not learned to read and write. On the other hand, New Jerseyites are more crowded—with just about an acre for each person, against more than one hundred and eighty acres for each New Mexican.

I doubt if we could even find a sample of typical American government. In some of the southern states many citizens do not have a chance to vote, because they cannot afford to pay the poll tax. In other states all the citizens may meet at least once a year to talk over public problems. Elsewhere, well organized machines get politics so completely into their hands, from time to time, that people really vote as they are told, not as they choose. Which sample shall we select?

A bolt of cloth, a bin of wheat or coal, or a keg of unfrozen cider can be sampled, because the material is usually the same throughout. But a race horse cannot be sampled. It is no good to look at his hoofs or



examine a lock of hair from his mane. You must see the whole horse in action, in order to know how his various parts work together. Do his feet get over the ground without tangling? Can his lungs supply oxygen to his blood, and his heart keep pumping that blood, as fast as needed under the strain of heavy running? Is he game? Will he run for all he is worth, or drop out and quit when the competition is stiff?

The United States is not a horse, any more than it is an old man with chin whiskers and striped trousers. But it is in many ways like a living thing, made up of many different parts which must work together. It is not just a land, nor just a people. It is a relationship between the two.

Look back at the figures about New Jersey and New Mexico which we put down just because the two states are next to each other in the tables. Look at these figures and then recall that New Jersey has ample rainfall, fairly level surface, and is on the Atlantic Ocean, right in the line of heavy commerce. New Mexico is very dry, very rough and mountainous for the most part, gets no ocean commerce, and divides the cross-country railroad traffic with other western states. New Mexico has wool and silver. Watch how her senators vote when these materials are concerned. New Jersey has great factories. See how her statesmen work for a high tariff on manufactured articles.

No, we cannot take America apart and talk sense about her. Her land is one, her people are one, in spite of the enormous diversity. But, most important

of all, land and people cannot be taken apart from each other.

The land shapes the lives of those who live upon it, and they in turn mold the land to their will. This relationship may be healthy, like that between forest and soil, where the forest draws its strength from the soil and in turn gives leaves and other litter and fosters animal life, both of which help to build up the soil. Or the relationship may be an unhealthy kind, like wolves preying upon sheep until both food and feeder perish.

CHAPTER III

MY COUNTRY, 'TIS OF THEE

BEFORE we talk about Americans, we need to take a view of our home. For the land is the enduring part of the relationship that is America. Our people and our ways of living change, but the great features of earth that shape our lives remain the same for thousands of years, no matter what we do to the details of the landscape.

The United States, as anyone can see from the map, stretches like a great broad band across the main part of North America. What luck for the silver-tongued Congressman when he makes a speech! "From Maine to California, from Florida to Oregon, from Canada to Mexico, from the Atlantic to the Pacific"—that is how he describes it, with such trimmings as suit his fancy.

The map shows a good many things that anyone can see for himself—such things as rivers, lakes, sea-coasts, and—if it is a very good map—mountains. None of these things are marked by straight lines, for straight lines are very scarce in nature. The trunk of a tall tree, a thread of spider web with the spider hanging on it, a beam of light coming into a dark and dusty room and the horizon of the ocean—such things may seem practically straight to us. But straight

lines are really scarce, unless man has been at work.

And so the lines on our maps which are straight or nearly so are the work of man. Some of these, such as roads and railroads, we can see for ourselves. Others, like the boundary lines between states and nations, cannot be seen by the traveler, unless someone has put up posts, or fences, or guards to watch the line.

If you could look at the earth as you look at a pumpkin, these straight lines which separate states and countries simply would not be there for you to see. And, of course, before you saw much of anything you might have to blow away the clouds which always hide a part of the earth's surface.

With the help of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes on the north, and the Gulf of Mexico and the Rio Grande on the south, it should be possible to tell, on this pumpkin-sized world, just about where, on North America, the United States begins and neighboring countries end. With a glass to magnify the surface here and there we could see that this land is not simply a smooth, flat stretch from one ocean to the other.

We should see that the heart of the country is the great Mississippi valley, with the river running south through the middle of it, and into the Gulf of Mexico. The western edge of this great valley would be marked by a long line of tiny ridges and bumps running north into Canada and south into Mexico—the Rocky Mountains. And the eastern edge of the valley would be marked by a line of still tinier bumps—the



Appalachians running along the Atlantic coast, not far inland.

Within the broad Mississippi basin the tributary rivers and streams would form a network quite like the finest lines on the palm of a man's hand. For the greatest valleys and mightiest mountains are small things indeed compared to the sweep of a country

which stretches twenty-five hundred miles east and west, and fifteen hundred miles north and south.

West of the Rockies our magnifier would show the ridges and bumps of broken mountain chains, with occasional broad smooth stretches between, reaching to the Coast Range which skirts along the Pacific.

Our world-the-size-of-a-pumpkin would, of course, not show the crazy quilt of states in different colors as we see them on the map. But there would be colors, I can assure you. Along the Atlantic and around the southern rim of the country, and west pretty well to the Mississippi we should see the deep green of the forest. For moisture in abundance produces trees. And west beyond the Great River we should pick up this color of the woods again in the higher mountains, both of the Rockies and of the Coast Range. Once more too we should find deep green in the Pacific Northwest, in Oregon and Washington, whence it stretches far north through Canada into Alaska, marking the most luxuriant growth on our continent.

Within the heart of our continent, westward from the great valley of the Mississippi, we would see the lighter, duller green, and more delicate texture of the grasslands. For here the climate is too dry for trees upon the uplands. Lush and rich at the eastern limits of their growth, these grasslands would be sparser and drier to the west, where they are known no longer as the prairie, but as the short-grass, or high plains. Indeed the pale, dusty short-grass forms a great strip running along the eastern front of the Rocky Moun-

tains, a giant's carpet often as much as three hundred miles wide.



Still farther west, in the great basins of the western highlands and in the Southwest particularly, not even the sod of short grasses can thrive. And here we should see a color that is more gray than green—the pallor of the scrub and desert land, where the soil is never hidden by the scattered plant life, spiny, fleshy, thick-leaved, or leafless altogether.

It must be admitted that, since the coming of that energetic little animal the white man, this pattern of colors has not look so simple and smooth as I have tried to show it. Ax and plow have first cleared, then

broken the ground. Networks of great cities have grown and spread. Plowed fields and pasture take the place of forest, and grain fields replace the native grasslands. These in their turn may be transformed to waste by our mistakes, or happily recovered to good use, if we are wise.

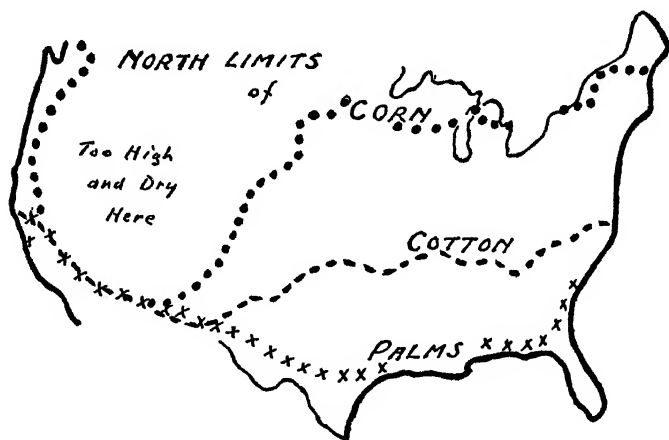
In spite of all men have done to change it, the natural pattern we have just described governs, in a large way, what Americans do and where they do it. Accustomed to thinking of our country as a broad east-and-west band, divided once by a great war into North and South, it is easy for us to forget that some of the most important lines in America run, not across from Atlantic to Pacific, but up and down, from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada.

This is true, roughly speaking, of our two principal seacoasts. It is true of our greatest river, the Mississippi and its valley. It is true of the great mountain systems which lie at the eastern and western edges of that valley, and the vast system of dry interior basins between the Rockies and the Coast Range which runs along the Pacific.

It is also true that the great vegetation belts form a series of broad north-south bands roughly parallel to the long axis of North America. These are modified somewhat by the moisture that comes northward from the Gulf of Mexico. On the whole, however, as we move westward from the eastern seaboard we cross in turn the forest, prairie, short-grass, and scrub. But as the desert is approached the regularity of the pattern

breaks up, and we find the Southwest a great desert center, reaching quite to the Pacific in southern California, while the coast farther north is a moist green land of forests.

Such are the things one might see if he could stand off a bit, blow the clouds away, and look at America. But there are, besides these things, three lines, very important, very crooked, and so far as I know quite invisible, which run roughly east and west. One is the



line north of which oranges, dates and other kinds of palm trees cannot grow because of the cold. This line runs along northern Florida, touches the Gulf Coast just south of New Orleans, and swings northward across California.

Next comes the line north of which cotton cannot grow. This was not exactly the line across which we fought our bloody Civil War, but it was among the reasons for that war. Still farther north is the invisible line beyond which corn does not thrive, although wheat, rye, and barley grow far to the north of it.

This is about as far as one can go with a rough picture of our land. At any rate, over what we have described is a rich diversity of soils, drainage, mineral deposits, power sites, and trade routes.

Beyond our boundaries, but still in the Western World, are our possessions—Alaska and various islands. We have little reason to blush for the way we acquired them, or the way we have tried to deal with them. Alaska is about the size of Scandinavia, and about the same distance from the equator. Hawaii is a pleasant place, a convenient military outpost, and can grow sugar cheaper than we can, although it does not produce food enough for its own people.

Puerto Rico is too full of people. The Virgin Islands are coming back to some kind of prosperity since the restoration of their chief industry, the making of rum.

The Philippines are ours in a sense, too, with their glorious mixture of brown, yellow, and white people. But we really took them over in much the same spirit as a man who wears an uncomfortable dress suit to please his wife and impress his neighbors. The Philippines produce good cheap sugar, and excellent cheap tobacco. But so do we, and to save our own

profits, we have kept out, or at least have not encouraged, their trade.

For a long time the Filipinos were very anxious to be rid of us, which hurt our pride. Now they are not so sure, for they are nervous about their hungry neighbor to the north, Japan. Our soldiers and our ships, our money and our factories for making weapons, all seem strangely comforting. If little Japan can manage to swallow the Chinese dragon and let the meal settle a bit, the Philippines will be like a dish of ice cream.

However important and interesting these outlying parts of our country may be, or however deeply they may involve our destiny at some future time, to most of us the United States begins on one ocean coast and ends at another. Within that wide band of this continent we must, for the most part, do our work as citizens and live our lives as human beings.

It is this land which people from every part of the globe have made into America. And while they were about it the land, by simply being what it is, was helping to shape them into one people—the Americans.

CHAPTER IV

WE MOVE IN

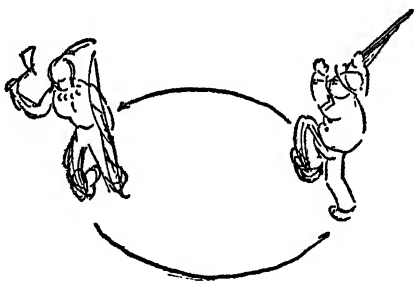
FROM a group of small colonies along the Atlantic coast, America has grown, by buying, building, fighting, and just by taking what we wanted when we could. Men and women, wise, brave, and devoted, as well as scoundrels not a few, have played their part in this growth. Heroes, known and unknown, are scattered along the line of march. But in spite of all the courage and work, there are parts of the story of America's growth which are not pretty.

For in addition to getting title to this land by fighting or dickering with the European powers who claimed different parts of it, we took it away from the people who lived on it, the Indians. Sometimes we did this fairly and squarely, with good will and real understanding on both sides.

More often, we used promises called treaties, which we too frequently broke as fast, almost, as we made them. We drove hard bargains, to say the least, and cheated and robbed the Indian, to put it more strongly. For his idea of property was not ours, and he was not trained in the fine points of white man's business—as indeed many white people, to their cost, are not.

We destroyed the woods and streams upon which

the wild life, food of the Indian, was dependent. We slaughtered the beaver, the elk, and the buffalo; and we saw no harm in killing the Indians themselves. Imagine yourself gathered with your neighbors in a church, as were the praying Indians at Gnadenhütten in Ohio, and having people attack you with guns and flames. Or imagine yourself with your family and other families in a little village on the Washita River, suddenly attacked by armed and organized troops, who shot everybody in sight.



It must be said that the Indian, in his turn, acted cruelly and stupidly, as well as bravely. He was fighting for his home. Driven out and broken, herded on land no one else wanted, the Indian has had and is having today a hard time of it in the white man's world. Even so, many Indians say that there was no help for what happened to their fathers. It is the way

of the world when the strong want what the weak have. Over much of the troubled world today this rule of ruthlessness and violence still persists. But we cannot help asking whether it must always be so.

One grain of comfort we can have from this part of our past. There were probably not as many Indians north of Mexico in the days of Columbus as there are people in Cleveland or Los Angeles. And all of the suffering added up—if you can add suffering, which is very doubtful—might have been no more than that in one small district of war-torn Spain or China. We destroyed the homes of perhaps a million to make homes for one hundred and thirty times as many. I doubt that the suffering in foreign lands today will have such a practical outcome.

While we were getting hold of this land from English, French, Spanish, Mexicans, and our own Indians, we were busy moving onto it. Sometimes, as in the case of Texas, we moved first and took afterwards.

We moved and kept moving. And for men to move there must be highways, either by water or by land. And so the story is a tale of rivers, canals, turnpikes, and later railroads. Ever since history began, such routes of travel and commerce have done much to lay the pattern of cities, wealth, and opportunity. Without wheels or beasts of burden, the Indian much preferred to use his graceful canoe. Little wonder that we find the remains of so many of his villages along our rivers and lakes.

Of course, the first trail-makers in any land are the wild animals. Somehow, by endless trying, they discover the best routes for year-around travel, taking account of hills, valleys, streams, and swamps. If a trail washes out, or doesn't work, they give it up for a better one.

The Indians made use of animal trails, and the white engineer found that he could do little better. When he has tried he has often got into difficulties. The trick of running roads crisscross at every mile, in straight lines, regardless of the lay of the land, is very modern and very dangerous. For in many places man-built roads have created a new, artificial way for water to run off—a drainage pattern that does not fit the lay of the land—and have caused rich farms to wash away in turbid floods.

The Hudson River led our forefathers north from the great harbor of New York and into the Mohawk valley, which they followed west. Here was a magnificent early highway to the Great Lakes and beyond.

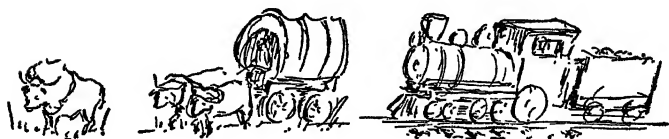
Farther south, the old National Turnpike, following a trail from Baltimore westward, was a direct route to the Ohio River and overland across it. That river itself served the white man, in the way it had served the Indian, as a main artery of traffic. Today the river traffic has diminished, but if you drive an automobile you may follow the old National Turnpike west through Columbus and Indianapolis.

Overland, or by water, however they went, once men got into the Midwest, they met and joined the

tides of people moving inland from New Orleans and Galveston. And far into the West, up the streams which flow from the Rocky Mountains into the Mississippi valley—up the Missouri, the Platte, the Arkansas, and the Red they went. The Pacific Coast was reached partly by such hard journeying and partly by sea travel, which was sometimes harder.

Then came the great race of the railroads. The New York Central went up the Hudson, along the Mohawk, and west past the Great Lakes. The Pennsylvania swept straight west through the mountains of that state. The Baltimore & Ohio followed roughly the old trail. Branch roads, and railroads through the southern states, followed. Often the new roads ran along the routes of rivers and expensive canals, whose slower, cheaper traffic was unable to compete with the new speed and organization.

Later came the building of great lines across the continent to the Pacific—a mad and wasteful race into virgin country, ahead of the pressure of need. Politicians liberally greased with dollars, railroads in their turn enriched by grants of kingdoms of land, engineers and builders working miracles.



Thus did we move our people, and tap our soil, our forests, mines, and water resources. There seemed really to be no end. We moved in and helped ourselves faster than we or the rest of the world could take what we had to give. Until after the World War much of the profit from all of our digging and cutting and growing went to Europe. We owed her money and paid her tribute. Thus did we pay for her war of 1914-18, both before and after it was fought.

In our haste we forgot to ask whose stuff it really was that we were using so fast. We forgot to ask whether everyone, including those yet unborn, was likely to get his fair share. Now and then questions did arise, which harassed lawyers tried to answer. But their answers were based upon experience in an older and very different world. Such answers did not always spell justice or the final good of society.

We moved faster than we planned. We built under the pressure of excitement rather than with thought of the future. In turn we depleted mine, forest, and farm and had to retreat. Ghost towns, ghost factories, and ghost farms too often are all that remain to tell the story.

Of course, human courage, cleverness, and enterprise have not been fruitless. There are prosperous towns, busy factories, and fertile farms to balance those that have been given up. But we have such prosperity as remains, in spite of our mistakes in the past. There is not enough left for us to afford many such mistakes in the future.

CHAPTER V

WHO AM I?

“**A**ARONSOHN, Abbott, Ackerman, Antonelli”—the dusty sergeant of B Troop, the —th United States Cavalry, is calling the roll of enlisted men. “Bengston, Borowitz, Borsodi, Braun, Brian, Brown”—the butcher on Main Street, Mr. Clancy, is running over the list of his customers, getting ready to mail out his monthly bills. “Christian, Christopoulis, Chretienne”—Miss Levitsky, who teaches the third grade, is seating the new pupils in her room.

The names are English, Dutch, Swedish, French, Scotch, Irish, Portuguese, German, Italian, Balkan, Russian, Syrian, or perhaps Chinese, as the case may be. Sometimes we cannot guess what they are because the spelling has been changed. Neighbor Cone may be spelling his name just as his English grandfather did. Or he may have had an Irish grandpa named Cohan, who did not like the English and grew impatient at having to explain how his name should be spelled. Or maybe his grandpa was a kindly old Jew named Cohen who was quite willing to let the English and Irish settle their own troubles, provided they let him alone.

However that may be, we say that the people who have these names are Americans. And so they are.

It may be that my father came over from Serbia about 1900 to work in a great steel mill. That makes me an American, just as good as Patsy O'Reilly whose grandfather came over in 1876 to help drive railroad spikes so the iron horses could draw men and freight across the great West and out to the Pacific Ocean.

But I must say that Patsy and I have our doubts about little Ivan Kornoff who slipped out of Russia



with his father a few years ago; the old man doesn't speak very good American. But Ivan is learning. His *r*'s don't sound so funny as they used to. Besides, Ivan knows how to make money and save it too. We can understand that. He'll be an American yet.

Henry Schmidt likes to sit around the table after dinner while his dad smokes a pipe and talks. The other evening he told Henry about his great-grandfather Heinrich, who ran away from Germany in 1848 to keep out of jail. Heinrich didn't steal anything, or kill anybody, but he did something like voting for the wrong man.

Anyhow, when he came here everybody laughed at the way he talked, and called him a dumb Dutchman,

just as they used to call my old man a dumb Hunky when they thought he didn't understand. But Heinrich was a good workman, and made fine furniture out of the oak and walnut and wild cherry trees that used to grow here. Before he died he owned a big factory and lived in a big house. Any man who works in America can be an American.

When Henry's father was a young fellow the factory shut down. It was losing money because the fine wood was getting scarce, and people were using iron bedsteads and painted stuff. Henry's people don't have much money now, but they're Americans all right. His father was mayor for three terms, and men who serve America are Americans.

Ivan Kornoff may be rich as old Heinrich Schmidt some day. It looks that way now. And maybe some day he will go to Congress. People like him, even if he is busy making money.

The old editor of our paper says this town reminds him of the yeast in a jug full of fermenting cider—up from the bottom, down from the top. His family was here when the town started, so he ought to know.

Brewster Alden Webster—that's his full name—was born after his father came back from the World War. They say his people have fought in every war this country ever had, beginning before it was a nation, in the French and Indian Wars. His mother's and his father's people came over to New England about as soon as any white folks. They still have a lot of old furniture; besides the old books and family letters.

It seems from these old papers that the first American on Mrs. Webster's side of the house was called a gentleman. People always addressed him as "Master" and his wife as "Mistress." But on Mr. Webster's side the first American was a farmer. He was called "Goodman" Webster and his wife was called "Goodwife," or simply "Goody" Webster. It would not do to call them Master and Mistress, then, or Mr. and Mrs.

Today Brewster's father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Webster to everyone, laugh about that. Mrs. Webster is careful, though, not to laugh too much. She is thoughtful about other people's feelings and because of her courtesy, not because of the old Pilgrim gentleman, people speak of her as a lady. The Websters are Americans, no doubt about that. Brewster says the thing that really cinches it is the fact that a Webster once married the daughter of a Dutchman and a Mohawk Indian woman, who was more of an American than any of us.

When you speak of an American you mean a certain kind of human being, different from others. But it is hard to describe him. There are 130,000,000 of us scattered over one of the largest countries in the world. We differ among ourselves, not only in our parentage, but in the way we speak, in our dress, manner, and in other ways. Yet America has set its mark on all, and given us some characteristics that we share as a people. By these signs—and you almost always have to take several of them into account—you can usually know an American when you meet him.

If he talks—and Americans like to talk—his speech will give him away, of course. We say he speaks English, but he really has his own language, which in accent and even in many of the words and their meanings, is quite different from English. This always happens when people carry an old language to new places. For one thing, many of the people who came into the Middle West or were born there had to learn new words not from hearing them spoken, but from dictionaries, spelling books, and from reading. And so they pronounce words as they are spelled rather more than the Englishman does; the Englishman often swallows whole syllables without trying to say them. He says “ord’n’ry,” while we very carefully say the whole word—“ordinary.”

When an Englishman says a person is well bred he means that person comes from a “good” family, usually a family of means and leisure. Such persons naturally have a chance to learn courteous manners. When we call a person well bred, we mean that he has been trained to be considerate of others, regardless of the kind of grandparents he may have had.

And the Englishman is likely to be shocked at our use of the words “gentleman,” “sir,” and “ma’am.” Only the Queen is addressed as “Ma’am.” Our English cousins burn petrol in their motorcars. We burn gas in our autos. They go to the cinema. We go to the movie.

Very often you can know an American by his clothing, though it is not easy to say how you do this. For

one thing, skilled tailors and rich woollens are very costly in this country, so most of us wear clothing that has been made by machines, and looks it. Even so, styles both for men and for women are passed back and forth from one country to another; therefore clothing is not too certain a guide. About 1910 peg-top trousers, pinchback coats that looked like corsets, and high-heeled shoes such as Frenchmen wore were fashionable in this country. Since the World War loose baggy English clothes for men have been popu-



lar in the United States, although it is hard to get rid of the mark of the machine and its quantity production.

Sometimes you can recognize an American by his manner and bearing, but I should not like to risk this always. His greeting and handshake may help a little, and the way he uses his fork certainly gives him away in Europe, where one keeps his fork in the left hand and knife in the right, at all costs. A few years ago a dinner party in Paris nearly broke up; every one

became so fascinated at the skill of a Nebraska boy who shifted his fork from one hand to the other as need arose, without missing a bite, that the French people almost forgot to eat. Which is really quite a serious matter if you know the French.

An American is not likely to click his heels together and bow stiffly at the hips when he is introduced to a lady. And in a restaurant he may start visiting with the waiter as though that individual were a person and not a domestic animal. And speaking of animals, in the days when Americans often worked on horse-back, they rode in their own curiously relaxed manner, with the horse rather than on it.

Scientists who study the human body sometimes tell us that there is coming to be a distinct American physical type or race. College boys and girls are taller on the average than their parents, their feet are likely to be bigger. They probably have better teeth, too, because Americans are more interested in proper diet, exercise, and sunshine than they used to be, and there are more good dentists. These same changes, however, have been going on in the countries of western Europe, except as the privation of wartime diet and hardship have reversed the process.

If Americans eventually become much different physically from their kinsmen in other lands it will be the kind of difference which will show up only by measuring thousands of them and studying these measurements. If you were to line up a lot of people from different countries, all in the same kind of bath-

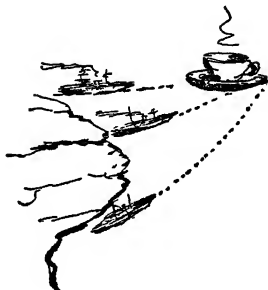
ing suit, or in none, it would be very stupid to expect any scientist to walk along and tag each American. I doubt very much if he would succeed. At least I should not want to try it.

As a matter of fact, it is often hard to tell certainly the group of human beings to which a person belongs, just by looking at him. You know an Indian by the color of his skin, his straight black hair and high cheekbones. But if a Mongolian were dressed like an Indian, you might have trouble in telling which was which. For they are related. It is hard to tell some Italians from some Egyptians, and hard to tell some Egyptians from some negroes.

The American people are made up of all the great races that exist, which neither is a new nor should it be a surprising thing on this earth.

CHAPTER VI

EVERY BRAND IS A BLEND



YOUR favorite coffee, tea, tobacco, or perfume owes its aroma to the fact that skilled workmen carefully sample the materials which go into it and combine them to produce just that aroma. Very probably the beans that make your morning pot of coffee have come from two or more different countries in South America, and the tobacco in your cigar from more than one state. You do not object to such mixing. Without it you could not have what you want.

Man himself is a mixture. The fact that each one of us must have two parents attends to that. Wherever men and women meet, no matter whether they belong to the same group, or widely different groups, they are attracted to each other. Social pressure and

strict laws cannot prevent this. They merely serve to show how powerful is the mating urge among human beings and what strenuous measures are considered necessary to accomplish any control whatever over the breeding of men and women.

Small tribes of savage people, living in scattered villages, have the best chance to keep their blood "pure." Yet strangely enough we often find them trading outside for wives, stealing them, and adopting strangers into their group. We cannot be sure that any community of people on earth has been even reasonably pure-blooded for any great length of time.



Castes, or social classes, sometimes make a great effort to keep their blood free from mixture. This is most familiar to us in the case of royalty, whose circle is fast becoming so limited that it is very hard for a prince or princess to find an eligible partner who is not a cousin. Even this caste-bound group recruits itself outside, from time to time. Napoleon Bonaparte

made himself a monarch. One of his marshals, Bernadotte, became ancestor to the present vigorous royal family of Sweden, whose old King Gustav plays a better game of tennis than many men half his age, and whose Crown Prince is an active and sensible man who would do credit to any land. England's queen today, though nobly born, is not of royal stock.

In the Dutch East Indies one sees an interesting example of the caste system at work. The young officers and civil servants who go out from Holland do not have the money to bring along their Dutch sweethearts. They marry native wives by whom they may also have children. Then, when there is money enough saved up to send home for the white wife, the native woman is sent back to her people. Her children, however, are kept and treated with the same kindness and given the same advantages as their younger, all-Dutch half-brothers and half-sisters from the second marriage. Such, at least, is the account of a Dutchwoman who is very proud of her Malay blood. So far as this method is actually followed, one must give credit to the level-headed Dutch for not leaving a lot of little half-white misfits scattered around in native villages, as is the usual custom of Europeans living among people of another color.

In mountainous countries where people live in deep valleys, cut off by themselves, it is sometimes not easy to bring in wives and husbands from outside. After several generations everyone in such a place is related to everyone else, and all are more or less mem-

bers of the same family, often quite similar in appearance. Under such conditions we often find disease increasing and people becoming less vigorous. We say the stock is running out.

We used to think that this was simply because inbreeding brings out the weaknesses in any race of living animals. But that is not necessarily true. Some of our most vigorous kinds of domestic animals, like island ponies and the police dog, are highly inbred. Inbreeding only becomes dangerous when we have bred out the capacity for reproduction or when we cannot get rid of the inferior animals, or at least keep them from breeding. But, of course, no human mother and father nowadays would be willing to get rid of inferior children. The more helpless the child, the more tender the care likely to be given him.



Probably a worse thing than inbreeding in isolated mountain valleys is the lack of a sufficient variety of food. Commerce with the outside is just as important

in bringing in a variety of foodstuffs as it is in securing husbands and wives from other places. Very often it happens that in a particular valley not all of the necessary minerals are present in the soil. Goiter, for example, is a very common disease among people shut off in such places. Goiter is frequently caused by lack of iodine, which is abundant in sea foods but often scarce inland. The ancients, who did not know this, nevertheless used burnt sponge as a remedy, and it has been suggested that the Indians who lived in the "goiter belt" of the Middle West used to import smoked oysters from the New England coast. If they did so, the missing chemical element would have been supplied. But people living in isolation and poverty, with no commerce in foodstuffs outside are often unable to get enough iodine to protect their health.

Another disease of widespread occurrence which strikes those who are not able to get the minerals and vitamins necessary to humans is pellagra. It is common in some of our southern states where corn and corn-fed hog are the staple diet. Its effects, like those of goiter, might easily be mistaken for physical degeneracy due to inbreeding.

Certainly it is not scientific to speak of the ill effects of inbreeding without taking into account the damage that can be done by improper food. Nevertheless, the children born of marriages between people who are closely related are more likely than others to inherit insanity or some other weakness. Since marriage between people who share no near relatives is a more

humane way than killing off defective children to keep the stock healthy, human groups have seldom tried to remain "pure." In the long history of mankind, inbreeding has, in general, been the exception; mixture has been the rule.

The only thing unusual about the mixing of peoples that has gone on in the United States is that it has happened more rapidly here than in most other places and times. America was discovered less than five hundred years ago. Most of what is now the United States has been settled in less than a hundred years. Even New England, with three hundred years of history, represents only ten generations of white men. It may take ten generations, using the greatest care in breeding, to produce a new type of dog or cattle.

Every great center of commerce or military power in the world has seen the mixing of races and peoples. Slaves, wives, and workmen are brought in from the outside. Merchants and invading soldiers come in and settle down, marrying "native" women, just as the Dutch have done in Java, the Spaniards in Mexico, and the French in Quebec. Many of the hired Hessian soldiers of George III settled down around Trenton, New Jersey, after Washington had captured them on a jolly Christmas Eve.

The same sort of thing happened in the ancient world in Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Because these great nations all in turn went to pieces, the mixing of blood has often been blamed for the decline of

peoples. This is about as scientific as saying that a man who wore a green hat when an automobile hit him was killed because he had on a green hat.

The mixing of races has been going on for thousands of years in China, where all the people seem Chinese enough to us. It even took place in Sweden, when Tartars from Asia swept into that country; that is the most likely reason why many Swedes today have brown eyes and dark hair, instead of the blue and gold which we expect in Northmen.

Mother England is certainly a mixture of peoples, so far as blood is concerned. The Romans came in under Caesar and conquered the Celts. Many of the Romans stayed; the buried foundations of their pleasant country villas are to be found all over the south of England. These old fellows evidently thought they were there for good. And in a way they were, for they passed on Roman characteristics to their children, who intermarried with peoples who had been there before and peoples who came afterward.

Before the days of the Romans the Phoenicians, that lost race of sailors and merchants of the ancient world, traded in Britain for tin. And after the Romans had their day all sorts of wild sailors and pirates raided the British coast. Many of them, too, settled down, to be raided in turn. Finally Britain was "conquered" and put in order by the Normans from France, themselves a mixture. They treated the Saxons, a German people who held England at that time, like dogs. But in the end the two groups mingled.

the beginnings which make it possible for him, in the surroundings in which he grows up, to become a criminal, or a musician, or a good business man. In other surroundings he may become something entirely different. The things which can happen to him are so many and so different, and so important in shaping him, that we cannot afford to be careless about them. There is evidence, for example, that even the I.Q. (intelligence quotient), so often regarded as fixed by heredity, can actually be changed by improving conditions of health and environment.

A man with an expensive pup will not risk him in the hands of a stupid or ignorant trainer, who may break his spirit, make him afraid of a gun, or cause him to become disobedient.

With our own children, unhappily, we take much greater chances. With the children of others we are likely to let the whole matter go with a shrug, saying: "If there is good in them, it will come out. If not, there is no skin lost off my nose." Which is a very convenient way of excusing ourselves for being shiftless.

For it really is our affair. Unless the schools are as good as they can possibly be made for all of the children in the community, we are likely to wake up some sunny morning and find that they are not as good as they should be for our own. Even if we can afford to send our children to better schools, they must grow up among children who do not have this chance. We used to think that, for our own children, this might

petition if the white man's laws had not stacked the cards in their favor.

It should be clear enough that "race" is an extremely tricky word, whether we are talking about Americans or about any other human beings. It is a wise child that knows his own father, and a wiser one yet that knows his great-grandparent.

One may be proud to be an American—he should be proud. But there is no poorer way to show that pride than by saying we belong to a better race of men than our fellows. When we say that, either we are dishonest or we do not know what we are talking about. For blood is like life itself. It refuses to stay neatly packed and labeled, like bottles on a shelf. Our job is not to boast about what we are, but to give thought to what we can make of ourselves.

CHAPTER VII

MY FELLOW AMERICANS

MY FELLOW American may have come—either he or his people before him—from any country in the world. He may live anywhere in this very large United States. He is one of about one hundred and thirty million men, women, and children.

He may live near the northern boundary line, where the heavy winter snows linger for weeks, where wood must be cut and ready, barns and storehouses filled, and all of the farm buildings snugly connected. Or he may live so far to the south that he never sees ice or snow and uses fuel mainly for cooking—where food is so cheap and abundant that he need not store it up, and where the heat and pests would spoil it if he did—in a low, loose, scattered shelter through which the wind may blow to keep him somewhat cool. Most of us live somewhere in between.

My fellow American may live on a damp seacoast where the moisture keeps everything green, and where fog often makes sailing and driving dangerous. He may be as much at home among the waves as on land, knowing the language of the winds and waters and making his way safely where many of us would not live five minutes. Or he may tend his flock of sheep, or search for gold on the lonely desert, with

only his dog and horse for company. Here too he may walk safely in the midst of dangers—rattlesnakes, hunger, thirst—for his problem is not too much water, but too little. But, again, most of us live somewhere between seacoast and desert.

My fellow American may spend most of his working hours high in the air, flying a transport plane. Or he may work deep in the earth, mining coal or copper. He may live in a building which houses a thousand others; or his nearest neighbor may be five miles away. He may be so rich that his money is a burden; or he may not know where his next meal is coming from. He may be a Will Rogers, known and loved by millions, or he may be a forgotten tramp lodged somewhere in a lousy jail. He may be toothless and near a hundred, or a newborn, red, helpless, and squalling babe. But again, these are all extremes. Most of us are somewhere in between.

How many giants do you know? How many dwarfs? Only a few, if any. You do know a number of people who are oversize, and many who are undersize. But most of those you know are of medium height, neither



tall nor little. You say that most people you know are average.

It is not hard to measure a man's height or his weight. You can also, after a fashion, measure other qualities he has. You can measure his capacity to do physical work by counting the number of postholes he can dig, of bricks he can lay, or the number of pages he can copy on a typewriter in a given length of time. You can measure in a way his ability along other lines, in curing disease, making money, or winning votes. Whatever the human quality, so long as we can measure it, we find the same thing to be true. The extreme types are uncommon. In our qualities, just as in our dwelling places and occupations, most of us are in between.

It is also important to understand that a person who is exceptional in one respect is not likely to be so in others. The big fellow who can bash in the most heads is very useful in a gang fight; but he could hardly hold together an army fighting in a hopeless cause for four years, as the quiet, firm, and kindly Robert E. Lee was able to do in the American Civil War. The man who is an exceptionally good vote-getter, perhaps because of his ready smile and memory for names, may not be the ablest man at making laws or administering a great modern state.

Such facts as these, we ought to understand about our neighbors. Yet even when we do, we find it hard to use that knowledge. Let us suppose, for instance, that we live in a little town with two clothing mer-

chants. One is an unusually jolly fellow and a good story-teller; but to him a suit of clothes is just a piece of merchandise, to be bought as cheaply and sold for as much profit as possible. The other is a bit grouchy and plain-spoken, but he knows good cloth and good workmanship, and would be ashamed to let a customer step out of his place with a suit that was not right. At which place, honestly, will most of us trade? We say that the exceptionally careful buyer will trade with the second man. But are not careful buyers as rare as tall people?

We might ask a similar question about two men running for office. It will be the job of the man who is elected to take care of the public business, look after public health and safety, and spend the public money. One man is quiet, honest, and capable, but he does not make friends easily; he says, "I will do my best." The other is merry and friendly; we like him. He has never done anything particularly good, but he promises us all sorts of things. For which, honestly, are we more likely to vote? Again, we say the careful or the wise voter will choose the first man. But how common are such voters?

Now buying and voting are two of the very important things we all have to do. There are many others, such as choosing friends, and selecting wife or husband—a job which ought not to be too different from the choice of friends. There is also the very serious matter which we, strangely enough, usually think of as play—the ways we choose to spend our spare or

leisure time. Today there are all too many of us who have little to spend but spare time, and most of us have more leisure than our fathers. How we decide to spend it is indeed important.

Is a man who chooses wisely as rare as a man who is very tall or very short? Is he wise because he was born to be that way, as most (but not all) tall people were born to be tall? These are difficult questions which we may not always be able to answer as well as we should like. Later we shall see what is known about the effect upon our lives of the qualities with which we are born.

For the present, so that we can be thinking about it, let us ask another question. Suppose you were a teacher in charge of about fifteen or twenty of your young fellow Americans, which is all any one teacher should try to handle. Which would be more possible—to make sure that each of your charges would grow up to be a person of more than average size and power for football, or to make sure that each of them would be more likely than before to choose the better merchant, the better friend, the better candidate for an office?

I think I know how most of us would answer that question, for we are pretty sure that the good teacher has a chance—at least a good gambling chance—to change the way that young people behave. Often we hear a parent say: “I want my boy or girl to go to such and such a school. It is a better school than the one here at Toonerville.” By which he means that his

son or daughter will act and live differently because of the school.

Just how true this is, and how it happens if it is true, is a most difficult scientific question that can only be answered by studying each pupil as a separate problem, and then putting together our studies for thousands of pupils. This is a kind of scientific work that is really much harder than weighing the earth or discovering radio waves. But it is in many ways more important, and we shall see a great deal of it in time to come. When this work is fully under way it will do more to change living than the electric light or automobile, although that scarcely seems possible.

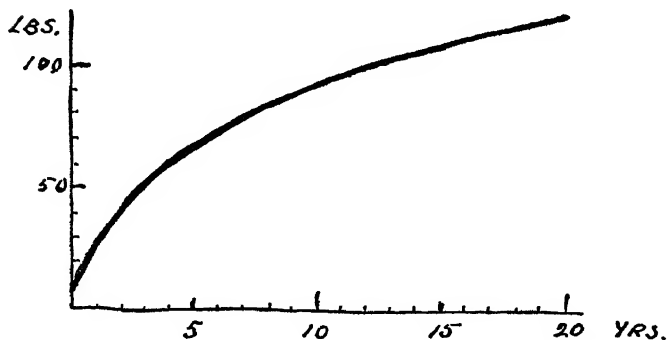
Meanwhile, there are two very important scientific truths about people of which we can be sure. And we have really been talking about those two truths in this chapter. They are quite simple—so simple that you may wonder why science has wasted time trying to prove them true. One reason, perhaps, is that most people act quite as though these two statements were not true.

1. No two human beings are exactly alike.
2. No human being stays exactly as he is or was—not one of us is ever just what he was the moment before. So long as he is alive he is changing.

We can say that all people are reasonably alike, or alike in some respect. We can tell them from horses or pigs. But not even “identical twins” are exactly alike, as you very well know if you are acquainted

with a pair of them. And if you want to see for yourself how much people differ even in small matters of bodily structure, go to the police station and talk to the fingerprint man. Ask him how much chance there would be to convict the wrong man if he found two identical fingerprints and knew who had made one of them.

We can also say that some people change more rapidly than others, and that each of us changes more rapidly at some times in his life than at other times. The baby doubles his weight in six months; but if that happens to a boy of fifteen we call the doctor.



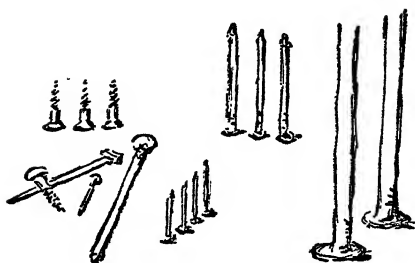
And undoubtedly some experiences through which people pass cause them to change more rapidly than usual—war, suffering, sudden great responsibility “call out new qualities in people,” as we say.

At any rate this America we live in has a little over one hundred and thirty million people, no two exactly alike, and everyone changing from one minute to the next. All of which makes it a much more exciting place in which to be than we realize. We say that we have to be practical and treat all persons alike. We say all men are equal before the law; but not even the law is usually so stupid as to insist that children be treated like grown-ups, or first offenders like hardened criminals. Often, without stopping to think, we say all men are created free and equal. Are they?

America was founded in the hope that every one should have an equal opportunity. That would be a large order under any circumstances. But in a world of changing men and women, who differ so greatly among themselves as we do, it is a very large order indeed.

CHAPTER VIII

NO TWO ARE ALIKE



AROUND any carpenter shop there is likely to be a box into which all sorts of odd nails, tacks, screws, nuts, and bolts are tossed. And one of the rainy-day jobs for the farm boy is to sit down beside such a box and sort out its contents. Probably he will start by throwing all the nails into one pile, the screws into another, and so on. Then he will go back and separate the square-cut, iron nails from the round steel ones, after which he will make separate piles for each size, from the little twopenny fellows up to the big twenty-penny spikes. If he finishes the job he will have each size of every kind in a little box by itself.

This he has done by studying resemblances, or likeness, and by looking for dissimilarities, or difference.

And that is the way, as we go through life, we learn about plants, animals, people, rocks, clouds, and everything about us. The man of science is only a person who has been trained to be especially careful and skillful in looking out for likeness and difference, and in keeping accurate records of what he sees. And the man whom we call a good judge of human nature has watched the likeness and difference among people so well that when he meets someone he has never seen before he can soon tell pretty much what to expect from him. Of course, nails and bolts are simple objects, people are not.

One of the things that make people complicated is the fact that they change so. As we said before, no human being is ever what he was the moment before. When we have studied the differences and resemblances between people, we still know very little about them. We have to go on and find out all we can about what made them the way they are. With that knowledge to help, we have a better chance of getting along with those around us, and also a chance of finding the means by which Americans can be made into a better people than they now are.

Have you ever used the term "family resemblance"? You say Bill looks like his father, Susan like her grandmother, but that somehow Bill and Susan look like brother and sister. You say this is because they are related, or have the same blood. The idea is that something is passed on from parents to children, and that whatever that something is, it shows

up in the appearance and even in the actions of the children.

Yet if you have any children of your own, you know that each child is exactly himself and no one else. One may be as calm and good-natured as a cow, the other as restless as a little fox. Now and then you may find, with the help of a good doctor, that the restless child is not getting the food he needs. If the diet is changed, he may become calm and serene like his brother or sister. On the other hand, you are quite likely to find that the better his diet the more active and restless he becomes. You say he was born that way, and the other born to be different.

If these two are your children, do you let go when you realize that each is different? Do you say: "Very well, A. must grow up to be a sleepy, lazy, shiftless person, and B. to be a sputtering, hair-trigger nuisance—there is nothing I can do about it"? Not if you can help it. If you are wise enough to be a good parent, which few of us are, you will form a picture of what you want each child to be like when he grows up. You will try to help each child make the best use of what he has, and to make up for what he has not.

You will help the quiet child to see what is going on around him, to become skillful, perhaps even rapid in his bodily movements, to meet and like people, and to take part in the activities of others. You will try to help the eager child to control the movements of his body, and his speech, to learn to relax and restrain himself, and to be patient with others.

With proper help, especially from good teachers, and the right surroundings, you may have an amazing success.

Or, for reasons that you cannot understand, you may fail. If you do fail, you say that nature was too much for you. But you will always wonder whether, out of all the possible kinds of experience you might have given the child, you gave him the kind which was best for him.

Fortunately, exceptional children are just that—few and out of the ordinary. So are exceptionally good and exceptionally bad experience. And it is really very hard to spoil most children. If you do spoil a child, the world soon shows him he cannot have tantrums, or loaf his way along, or be a pest, and get away with it. All of us, in fact, must come to live in a grown-up world that is different from the world of growing-up. Only when the change is too great do we become unhappy, or sometimes quite useless because of it.

Anyhow, two sorts of things make each person become what he is: what he is born with, and what happens to him after he is born. Occasionally we can be sure which is which. A person is certainly born to have blue eyes, or brown hair, or a snub nose, or beautiful hands. What happens to him afterwards determines whether he speaks French, plays tennis, or takes care of his fingernails.

But suppose he learns to speak foreign languages very easily, or becomes the best tennis player in four

states. Is that because of something he was born with, or because of the conditions under which he grew up?

Josef Hofmann, who gave his first concert as a child more than fifty years ago, says that he had to be made to practice. Other children cannot be kept away from the piano. Are musicians born or made? Some well-known musicians require constant coaching to sing and play in tune. Others could not play for a barn dance, because they cannot keep time strictly enough. Perhaps the answer is that musicians must be both born and made. And that is probably true of people who learn many languages or become expert in tennis, or do well at anything else.

Even personal appearance is shaped the same way. We are born without clothing, and must learn to select, wear, and care for it. We may be born with the capacity to develop a healthy and beautiful body, but fail to do so if we do not have proper food, exercise, and sunshine. Much depends upon the way we learn to carry our shoulders and head, and to move our legs and arms.

We can do little about the shape of our features or our natural coloring. True, we can color hair and skin, but that is like wearing a wig—it fools no one but ourselves. But day after day the numbers of tiny muscles in our face, especially those of the eyes and mouth, are being trained—just as the arms and legs of the tennis player or the wrists and fingers of a musician are being trained—by use. They may be trained to fall into patterns of bitterness and selfishness, or of

friendliness and interest. The result is our habit of expression. That habit may make the most ill assorted face attractive, or the most beautiful, regular features become ugly.



I once knew a mother and daughter. The mother's face was attractive; her daughter's, one of the ugliest I have ever seen. It was many months before I saw that both had the same kind of eyes, nose, and mouth. The mother was hard-working, generous, and kind. The daughter was lazy, selfish, and disagreeable. She had been pretty—and badly spoiled—as a little girl. Even our skin tells on us. Although skins are sensitive to many things we cannot control, and people's looks may not be their own fault, one cannot live like a hog and have the skin of an angel.

Far harder to get at than physical qualities like the color of eyes, and skilled uses of the body such as rifle shooting, are the qualities of mind and spirit. Sometimes we are not sure what these qualities are; we only know their products, and their effects on other people. But such things also need to be looked

into because they are important both to ourselves and to America.

Two of the most valuable commodities in any market are judgment and leadership. They are not always for sale. You can purchase them only by hiring the man who has one or both of these gifts. They are valuable because they are rare, and because they are such powerful tools in creating wealth or doing the world's work. The only human trait for which we pay more willingly is that of great ability to entertain. The salaries of movie stars may exceed those of railroad presidents.

You will remember what we said about the gift of great musicianship—it must be both born and made. The same thing is true, doubtless, of any kind of superb skill.

When it comes to judgment and leadership, we have much to learn about what causes people to have them or lack them. Perhaps some of the qualities which go to make up judgment and leadership must be born in people, as the capacity for speed is born in thoroughbred horses, or power in Percherons. But training plays its part, too, in developing the greatest of "born leaders" and men with the keenest "native judgment." It is an old saying in the Army that no man is fit to lead others until he has learned to obey.

Whatever the qualities that make a leader—voice, bearing, good judgment, determination—life would probably not be so pleasant if everyone had them. Did you ever try to live in a town with many leaders?

A leader without anyone to lead is as unhappy as a dog with nothing to chase.

Seriously, of course, there are many kinds of leadership, and good judgment takes many forms. We have no right to say that most people are born without any capacity for either, in one form or another. For we can always ask "Who is being led?" and "What is being judged?" One of Theodore Roosevelt's former Rough Riders, who was associated with him later in public life, said, "If I were walking across Brooklyn Bridge with Teddy and he asked me to jump over the railing, I would do it, so great is my confidence in him." But at the battle of San Juan Hill there were regular army officers who did not feel that confidence, and in 1912 there were many who did not vote as Mr. Roosevelt wished them to.

A surgeon may have exquisite judgment over the operating table and none at all about investing his money. A fighter may know precisely when to cross with his right but have no sense about picking a wife.

Two of the greatest living musicians are Richard Strauss and Jean Sibelius. Asked by a critic about Sibelius, Strauss said, "He is musically uncertain." Sibelius said to the same critic, "Strauss writes for the present, Sibelius for all time." And professional music critics, whose own reputations rest upon their good judgment, do not agree about the relative greatness of these two men. The judgment of the fighter will be proved when the battle ends, but when shall we know which music critic has the better judgment?

Much more important is it to know why men follow the leader, and approve of judgment. We say that men generally follow the promptings of self-interest in such matters. "That editor has sound judgment; he says taxes are too high." Who is speaking? "Editor So-and-so is a smart man; he says, 'Soak the rich.'" Again, who is speaking?

In that particular case you might say that two men are speaking, and each wants what the first one has. But self-interest is not always so simple as this. Certainly it is not always based upon a struggle for riches, nor even for power. What is the self-interest of a nun who has sworn to leave the world? What is the self-interest of a man who despises business, loves work, and has not the gift of making money? Nor is self-interest in the rather narrow sense by any means the only source of human conflict.

A person usually values qualities that are admired and rewarded by the group to which he belongs. But one's own experience teaches him also to value things for himself, just as ten thousand men may buy hats made exactly alike, and wear them in ten thousand different ways. And the differences we inherit also help to make our values different; the most beautiful painting in the world is worthless to the person blind from birth. So there is infinite variety in the way we respond to the qualities of our fellow men—in the way we are entertained, in the way we follow leaders, in the way we approve of judgments. And where there

is not sympathy and kindliness between us, there is infinite possibility of strife.

Whatever may be the differences among men, either in their qualities or in their desires, we may be sure that both birth and experience—heredity and environment—play a part. Just how large a part each plays in any particular instance is one of the most difficult of scientific problems.

But while we await the answer, one thing is certain. The experience people have as they are growing up and passing through life does make a difference in determining what they become, the values which they will defend, and their attitudes toward others. And we can do something about that experience here and now, whatever we may be able to do about the matter of birth in some wiser day.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHANGING WORLD OF CHANGING PEOPLE

MEN are all different, and every one of them is always changing. Sometimes change is the chief cause of their differences, as we know by watching twins—identical twins, that is to say. For such twins have received from their parents, as nearly as possible, the same materials. What happens is that the egg, which usually grows into a single human being, breaks apart, instead, into two separate cells, each of which then becomes a person. Twins that are not “identical” arise from two separate eggs that start to grow about the same time. Only by an almost impossibly rare chance would two such eggs have exactly the same make-up.

Now even when identical twins grow up side by side, inseparable companions in the same family, school, and community, those who know them best can detect differences, not only of appearance but of temperament and behavior. Since the twins have two separate bodies, they cannot be having precisely the same experiences at the same time, eat precisely the same food, and the same amount of it, or learn precisely the same things.

If this seems strange, remember how difficult it is,

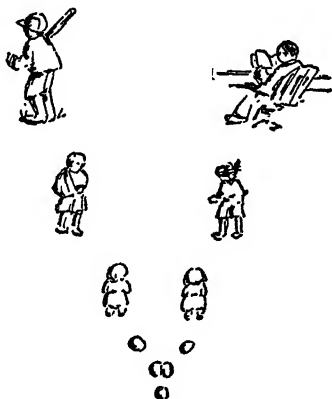
as you walk through the woods, to have a companion see everything that you see. One may pick out a bird in flight and then take several minutes to help the other find it. One may stub his toe, which does not mean that both must do so. Such simple experiences as these are different to each of you. Multiply them by the countless common experiences of everyday life, and you will understand how even twins, as much alike as two humans can be, and growing up as closely together as two humans can, slowly change into two very different people.

One may have an accident from which the other escapes, or may be infected by bacteria which cause some disease that has a lasting effect upon his entire body. Such events may increase the difference. The weakened body or irritated nerves of the one may cause him to respond less patiently to incidents and people that leave the other serene. And we say that each is developing a different disposition.

Now and then we find identical twins who have been separated at birth and taken to different homes to grow up. One may live in the country, the other in a city. As the years go by, it is interesting to see how the differences in food, exercise, and contact with people operate to produce the typical country boy in one case, the typical city lad in another. There may be, in the end, quite a difference in the way each passes an "intelligence test" and perhaps an "emotional test"—showing that experience plays a great part in shaping certain features of the mind and dis-

position, no matter what beginnings one may be born with.

Needless to say, information of this kind is what we need if we are to be sure of ourselves when we talk about the question of birth and training as factors in the making of Americans. Otherwise we can



only guess, and argue, and be no wiser when we are through than when we began. And one of the foolish arguments we are likely to get into is this: "Which is more important, heredity or environment?" For clearly both are so important that neither, by itself, can account for what a person becomes.

Not long ago a very intelligent white man was talk-

ing about a Negro of his own age of whom he was very fond. The white man was successful in his profession, the Negro was a poor and unknown person.

"It's all in the blood," said the white man. "Jim and I grew up on the same farm. His father worked for mine. We all played together. He had the same chance I had. We had exactly the same environment. I made something of myself, and he didn't. It was in my blood, and it wasn't in his."

Now anyone who has worked around a brewery knows that it is a considerable job to be sure that every vat of brew has exactly the same conditions, day after day and year after year. And anyone who tries, in the laboratory, to be certain that a half-dozen corn-plants or white rats receive anywhere nearly identical treatment, knows what a job that is. If the white boy and his Negro chum had been given anything like the same environment, each would have returned to the same kind of home for his meals and his sleep. Each would have been treated in the same fashion by the neighbors, the storekeepers, the banker. Each would have gone to the same schools and had the same teachers, the same amount of money to spend, and the same amount spent on him for clothing, medical care, and travel. When traveling, both would have been treated alike by railroad officials, hotel keepers, and chance acquaintances. It is obviously impossible in the United States for a black child to have anything like the same environment as a white, unless both are brought up in a laboratory.

No one would question that the white boy and his Negro friend had inherited different materials from their parents. One had inherited the ability to develop a white skin, the other a black; one, thin lips, narrow nose, and straight or wavy hair, the other, thick lips, broad nose, and kinky hair. On the other hand, each had inherited the bodily form, power of speech, thought, and behavior of a human being. In between these particular differences and general resemblances there are innumerable ways in which they might have been born reasonably alike, and just as many in which they might have been born with differences which could be noticed at once, or which might show up later, as life moved along for each of them. Either of the two might be able to tell the exact pitch of a musical note, digest wheat flour, run a hundred yards in ten seconds with proper training, and become a physician or a lawyer, or a general in the army. The other might not. And there is only one way in all the world to know whether these qualities are present or absent. That is to give each the same chance to develop those qualities. Until that is possible we cannot know what we are talking about when we say one has something in his blood which the other has not.

Even so, people who are alike in their capacity to develop certain abilities are likely to be so different in other respects that what means a chance for one is not always a chance for the other. Take the power to write, for example. One man will be taught to write

in the rough-and-tumble of a newspaper office, another by lonely reading, a third by the encouragement of a skillful and sympathetic teacher.

Of course there are not yet enough identical twins in the world who have been conveniently taken into different homes at birth and then conveniently discovered by men of science later on, to enable us to solve such important puzzles as we have been talking about. But there are other ways we can get some light on the subject of birth and experience.

We cannot very easily breed people for special qualities, as we have bred the dull-scented greyhound for speed, and the keen-scented bird dog to find hidden partridges. We have to work with people as they are, not always knowing with what tendencies they were born.

There is, however, a way by which we can learn a great deal, even if it is roundabout and imperfect. We can take groups of children just as they come, in large numbers, and watch the effect of different kinds of training and experience upon them. We can test them, if we are careful enough, both before and after, and see whether they are actually different in the way they behave because of their difference in experience; that is, whether they behave differently because of the ways in which they have lived during the time when they were under our direction.

Now testing human beings to learn how they behave is very different from testing human blood to see

if it is free from disease, or testing drinking water to see whether it contains germs or poisonous chemicals. Testing people is much more difficult, and not nearly so certain to give us a safe answer in every case. We test children and adults by skillfully watching and making a record of what they do and say under certain conditions. If we choose with great care the questions we ask them and the things we request them to do, and test large numbers of them in exactly the same way, then we do begin to find out something about them.

Even so, anyone who does such testing must always be on the lookout for his own mistakes, and talk over his problem as much as he can with others who are interested. Now and then children who are being tested may say to one another, "Let's play dumb," or "Let's pretend, and fool the tester." Adults may become resentful or confused. So anyone who tests people must understand and like them, and have a pretty keen sense of humor himself, or his tests may be worthless. Never must he forget that each person is different from all the rest—in some ways different even from those who come out just about the same on the tests.

When we are ready to use the tests, we take two or more fairly large groups and test them all for the kind of behavior we wish to change. It may be their skill in using tools, or their judgment in making up their minds about politics, or their helpfulness to others, or any one of many other qualities. After that, being

sure that both groups are reasonably similar, we treat them alike, except for the kind of experience we wish to test.

If we are studying the use of tools by children, for instance, we may turn one group loose in a workshop, with a supervisor who can answer their questions and show them how the work is done if they wish to find out. We may take the other group, explain the use of each tool, the properties of wood, and drill them in the handling of the tools before they go to work. At the end of several weeks, months, or years, we may test both groups again to see whether there is now any difference in their ability to work wood.

What do such tests show us? Not all we wish to know, by any means; but they do show how important the kind of experience which people live through is in shaping them into what they finally become. And as we make simple tests with very young children, we find the same thing to be true even back to cradle days. Habits of feeding, crying, and self-help in the very young can be developed soundly and rapidly by wise encouragement, or held back and twisted by discouragement.

As time goes on we are finding that more and more traits which we say people are "born with" are likely to be the result of very early training and experience. And so we are learning to be very careful about saying that So-and-so is a born criminal, or a born musician, or a born anything else. He may be born with

the beginnings which make it possible for him, in the surroundings in which he grows up, to become a criminal, or a musician, or a good business man. In other surroundings he may become something entirely different. The things which can happen to him are so many and so different, and so important in shaping him, that we cannot afford to be careless about them. There is evidence, for example, that even the I.Q. (intelligence quotient), so often regarded as fixed by heredity, can actually be changed by improving conditions of health and environment.

A man with an expensive pup will not risk him in the hands of a stupid or ignorant trainer, who may break his spirit, make him afraid of a gun, or cause him to become disobedient.

With our own children, unhappily, we take much greater chances. With the children of others we are likely to let the whole matter go with a shrug, saying: "If there is good in them, it will come out. If not, there is no skin lost off my nose." Which is a very convenient way of excusing ourselves for being shiftless.

For it really is our affair. Unless the schools are as good as they can possibly be made for all of the children in the community, we are likely to wake up some sunny morning and find that they are not as good as they should be for our own. Even if we can afford to send our children to better schools, they must grow up among children who do not have this chance. We used to think that, for our own children, this might

be a very good arrangement as they would always have an advantage over those who did not have such good training. Today, with our jails, hospitals, asylums, and bread lines filling up with people who are there in many cases because they did not have the proper kind of surroundings and experience when they were growing up, it is no longer even selfish good sense to talk about giving our own children a better chance than others.

This problem of the difference between people, and of shaping the changing lives of the young as they grow up is ancient—a long story, and mostly a sad one, too. Quite often people have believed that the right thing was for the children to live as their parents did and do the same kind of work. If the parents were wealthy and powerful, it was believed right that the children should be so. If the parents were poor and ignorant, so should their children remain. It was often called the will of God that people should remain as their parents were, and this led many to believe that people actually were very different because of birth. A prince was born to be a king; no one ever stopped to say that he was born into a family which was able to make a king out of him.

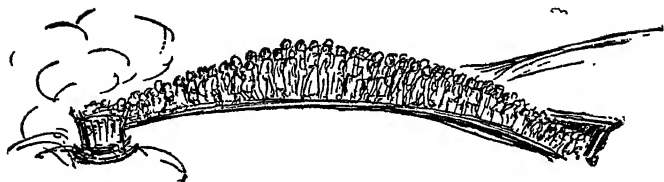
But generations have seen kings that were not at all kingly, and poor men's sons who were. Man has found his way about the earth, and discovered forgotten kinsmen in far and hidden places. Guns have

made all men about equal in battle. Castle walls have crumbled before the writings of peasants.

With the coming of machinery and world trade, intelligent labor came into demand; workmen had to be able to read directions and carry out instructions. As trade increased, then slackened, commerce had to sell its goods by having people read its advertising. It was no longer safe, possible, or even desirable to keep the mass of men totally ignorant. And always, be it said, there have been good people who had no wish to keep others in darkness. They gave labor and substance that we might have schools—the means by which we may in some measure give to the young the best experience to be had.

CHAPTER X

WHAT SHAPES OUR LIVES?



KAGAWA, the great Japanese, has a very simple story to tell, explaining why he became a Christian.

"I was very ill with lung disease, and no one would have anything to do with me. A Christian physician came along who cared for me, lived with me, and even shared my bed until I became well again."

You are likely to get many such stories if you ask people what has shaped their lives. Some accident, some person, some remark may truly make a great difference in the way one looks at life and behaves toward others. Though most savage tribes train their young people for grown-up life, some do not bother to do so. Instead, when the child becomes grown, they simply tell him, when he behaves like a child, that he should be ashamed of himself. This very quickly makes him act as a grown-up in that tribe should.

But the shaping of human lives is not such an easy matter as these stories would make it seem. There are many people who will hate the person who does them a kindness instead of feeling as Kagawa did. His life, before his illness, had been so shaped that he was ready to appreciate goodness. And the untrained savage children, for all their neglect, had been watching their elders since they were born; they knew how a grown-up savage should act.

On a warm spring day a tree may suddenly cover itself with green, as if the leaves had burst from their twigs. But many small changes develop those leaves until they are ready for this spectacular change. They can be many and healthy because of good weather, soil and moisture; or unhealthy because of storms, drought, and insects. It is so with us: thousands of small experiences develop us and determine what we shall become when the great experience arrives. And the nature of those small experiences that prepare us to turn into one sort of person or another depends very largely on two things—where we live, and the people who live with us and around us.

If we travel a little in foreign countries we are likely to come back with ideas something like these: "Germans are stubborn, English people are rude, Frenchmen get excited very easily, Spaniards are lazy." But if we live in some foreign country long enough to understand something about it, we come back saying, "They do things differently over there." And perhaps we may even come to realize that, if we

had grown up in that country, we should have done just as its citizens do. We should probably discover that the German merely seems to be stubborn, because he has been strictly taught that there is only one right way to do anything, and he is hurt and puzzled when anyone dares to suggest otherwise. Behind his seeming stubbornness you may find a remarkably kind and gentle soul.

If it is in England you live, you may find that the Englishman seems rude only because you have done something he has been trained to believe is very rude indeed—you have spoken to him without being properly introduced, perhaps. And so it goes.

If you live among any people long enough, you come to know what to expect, just as you learn what to expect as you drive along a familiar road. You may say that you know the "pattern" of the roadside; and in the same way, we speak of the "pattern" of behavior of a people.

Now patterns can be very complicated, as are those you see in a fine oriental rug. There is the pattern of the whole rug, and patterns within patterns. It is the same in the life of a modern people.

The life of a simple savage tribe is not very complicated. The group is usually small and has lived in the same sort of place for generations. Ways of doing things have been worked out and handed down from one generation to the next, and all of life is pretty much tied together into a pattern for everyone.

We still see something very like this in small villages and farming communities in our own country. But schools, good roads, automobiles, mail, and newspapers bring in changes from the outside, so that no village in our country is really cut off from the rest of us. Village life is a pattern within a pattern. It is part of the all-over design for living that is the United States, as a community of Americans.

Just what a life pattern is, and what it does for the people who are a part of it, will be easier to understand if we remind ourselves that man is not the only animal whose life is patterned.

If you know much about the lives of insects, birds, and other animals you know that they exhibit a sort of order and regularity which is often spoken of as a pattern of behavior. In the lower animals it does not seem necessary that this pattern be learned. A male moth which has never seen his parents or another moth, will emerge from his cocoon and fly toward a female of his own kind, fertilizing the eggs within her body. This female will then seek the kind of leaf upon which her young must feed, and deposit her eggs in the same way, and in the same sort of place that her mother before her did.

Birds will mate with their own kind, fly south with them in the autumn, north in the spring. They will build the same sort of nests as their parents before them, and feed their young in the same way that they themselves were fed. During courtship they will sing the same songs, or dance the same pantomime as birds

of that kind before them have done. Some of this pattern is undoubtedly learned, some of it needs no learning—how much, we cannot be sure. But the pattern of man's behavior is almost wholly one that he must learn.

The newborn child is as helpless as any baby bird, and remains so for a much longer time. He must learn from the beginning almost everything he does, except perhaps to suckle as soon as he is able and to perform actions which he does not have to manage, such as the beating of his heart, the breathing of his lungs, and the action of his digestive system.

Of course the child must learn from those about him. Words become a part of his experience, but they are the words of his own people. His hands learn the skilled movements that are practiced among his own people. And he has a most remarkably complex brain which can register his experience and which enables him to do what is known as reflective thinking.

By means of this remarkable brain, the things which happen to him, which he sees and hears, smells, tastes and feels, the things which he does and says—for saying is really a sort of doing—are all built together into him, to make him become what he finally is.

But all of these things that become part of him come from his surroundings. He is born into a certain climate and into certain geographical conditions. Gradually he becomes adjusted to the pattern of day and night, rain and dryness, winter and summer, land

and water, hill and valley, kind of food, and all of the things that vary from place to place over the earth.

But for him, by far the most significant part of his surroundings is the people among whom he grows up. It is with their aid, and in their ways, that he learns to adjust himself to the forces of nature about which we have just spoken, to the forces of nature within himself, and to those represented by other humans.

He may learn to protect himself from the cold by using animal fur, or quilted cotton, or fine woolen clothing. He may depend upon a campfire of wood or a steam furnace burning coal or oil. He may believe that his body is bewitched when he is ill, or that his disease is the result of an infection by a germ. He may believe that women are little better than dogs, that they are next to the angels, or that they are human beings like himself. He may consider that the most glorious thing is to kill other men, or that it is most glorious to deal kindly with his fellows. It all depends upon how the people around him do things, and what they think.

The way in which the people in any group do things, make and use tools, get along with one an-



other and with other groups, the words they use and the way they use them to express thoughts, and the thoughts they think—all of these we call the group's culture. So often we hear "culture" used as though it meant only the more useless, ornamental part of life, that we forget its real meaning. Some people think that culture means fine words, difficult music, and pictures that most of us do not care for. Words, music, and pictures, whether they are good or bad, are a part of culture, but only a part. For culture is that part of man's life (and a great part it is) which he makes for himself with the aid of his fellows.

Culture is the ways of a people. And so deeply is everyone marked by the culture in which he lives that it is no wonder we are fooled into saying, "He was born that way," not realizing that the naked, helpless, little animal he was at birth would have become an entirely different person had he grown up in another place and among people different from you and your neighbors. And very often indeed we talk about the qualities of a race or a nationality when we are really talking about the qualities of its culture.

The Dutch, for example, are a clean, thrifty folk, and very good farmers. We say that they are born farmers, born with a love of cleanliness and thrift. What we mean is that Dutch babies, born among people who are good farmers, clean, and thrifty, are shaped as they grow up into the same kind of people

as their parents and neighbors. The life of a Dutch farm family is a much more complicated matter than the life of a family of birds, but each has its pattern as it goes along through the years. This we can call the culture pattern in the case of the human family, just as we speak of the behavior pattern of other animals.

The Dutch pattern, as we know it today, is something that has come from long generations of human toil and effort. Indeed the written history of the people who are now the Dutch tells us much of the slow process by which they learned the use of metals, the growing of crops, the draining of ocean lands to make green fields, the building of canals and cities, the art of printing, commerce and manufacture.

Some of these things, the Dutch taught themselves, and later passed on to the rest of the world. This is true of many things about farming, and the draining of wet land. Other things, such as the art of printing and of tempering steel, the Dutch have learned from their neighbors. But, however new ways of doing things have come about, they have been built into the Dutch way of doing things, which we can call the Dutch pattern of living. It is this national way of living—this pattern—that shapes the lives of children and makes them into Dutchmen and Dutchwomen. Some of them are bright and alert, others slow and dull; some tall, some short; some rich, some poor. Not all have learned to do the same things, for the pattern of living, even in a small Dutch village,

is complicated. But all have been shaped by this pattern to take a part in it.

All of them speak Dutch, of course, but not with the same accent. It is said that an experienced person can tell, by listening to a Dutchman, from what part of the city of Amsterdam he comes. Sights, sounds, smells all mean to each Dutchman what the pattern of living in his neighborhood has made them mean, just as in our own country the smell of wood smoke makes a farmer boy think of bacon and coffee, while it makes the city boy think of the fire department.

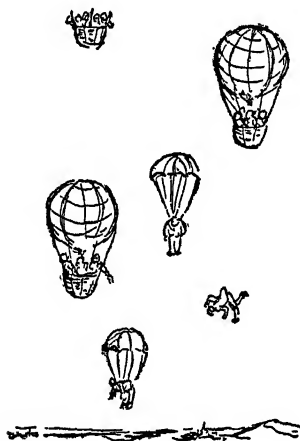
Our own pattern of living, like all others, is based on the landscape. The soil and the weather, the vegetation and the way the land lies, have shaped Americans, and their ways as well. The very size of the United States and the fact that there is plenty of room have played a part in making us what we are. One reason why our pattern is so complicated is the great variety of natural conditions under which people live and work here.

And the American pattern changes with the changing landscape. Every time we cut down a forest, or dammed a river or turned grassland into farms, we changed our very lives. The effects of things we have done to the American continent are at this moment working further changes.

To understand our pattern of living we have also to consider the people who settled the country, and what they brought with them in the way of beliefs,

habits, and customs. Our systems of property and business came over from Europe. We borrowed some customs, such as the use of corn and tobacco, from the Indians. Such things as we have taken from other cultures, we have changed to fit the American pattern. And at the same time we have been working out many new ways of our own.

Soon after we began to be a country, the use of science started rapidly to change men's ways over all



of the world. We have things which would have sounded like a wild dream to our grandfathers, and we have been getting them so fast that we could

scarcely change the old ways of living in order to take care of the new.

Thus it is that we say the American pattern of living, which shapes all of us everywhere across this immense land, is a most complicated affair. Not only is it so complicated that we have trouble to understand all of it, but it is changing so rapidly that we are puzzled to keep up with it. Many of the people who, as boys and girls, were trained for living before the World War, have trouble fitting into the world as it is today.

CHAPTER XI

THE PART I PLAY

I CANNOT help what I am born with, or the pattern into which I am born. That seems to make life a pretty hopeless affair for me; but not so. After all, if I understand the situation, there are some things I may be able to do about my own life. And if all of us who are part of America's ever-changing picture know something about the pattern of it, there is a great deal that can be done about the country as a whole and the ways it shapes our lives. Especially we can do something about the way it is going to shape the lives of our children.

It seems too bad to use an illustration drawn from the art of war, but we have to find our examples where we can. For a long time, we were accustomed to thinking of expert rifle shots as something uncommon. Certain individuals with keen eyes and steady nerves, not much to do, and plenty of ammunition to waste, became good shots. But no one else.

On the other hand, there seemed little use in asking a man to carry a fine rifle to war unless he could get the most out of it. And so very careful studies were made of the way in which the human body works in using a rifle—the muscular and nervous patterns of behavior which are necessary to good shoot-

ing. And as a result, ways were found to teach whole groups of men the art of shooting in a remarkably short time, and make them into what would once have been considered exceptionally good shots.

Pleasanter to think about is the new art of teaching youngsters to play on difficult instruments like the piano and violin. There is, of course, a certain percentage of people who cannot "carry a tune in a bucket," who have little sense of pitch or rhythm. But most of us have enough. However, in the old days, teacher and pupil blundered along, often with ill temper on one side, fear and dislike on the other. Now and then an unusual love of music, or unusual persistence, or the workings of chance, would produce an exceptionally good musician. But it is appalling to know how many started, and never got anywhere.

Presently, however, there came along a new generation of teachers who studied the child as well as the instrument he was to be taught. They watched the way in which hands, eyes, ears, and nerves actually work together. Balance and control were sought; awkwardness and strain avoided. Understanding began to take the place of stupid commands, pleasure began to replace fear, success took the place of failure and discouragement.

Today we have good orchestras and bands from one end of the country to the other, and teachers, in order to produce good musicians, no longer have to wait for luck plus a natural ability too strong to be discouraged. Now they turn out a high proportion

of competent young players. They are learning the very important lesson of making the best of the human material they have to work with.

Certainly no one can say that music teachers and their pupils are helpless in the same sense they were before. Before the newer ways of teaching were invented, so long as teachers tried, even in ways that were not the best, they were not entirely helpless, for they did produce musicians. But the thing which has made them still more successful is knowing more than they did, not only about the thing to be taught but about the youngsters they had to teach. Their greater knowledge and the will to apply it are the things which have helped to make the difference between Americans of yesterday, a people which had little music, and our own people today.

Now music is a part of the pattern of life for many people, and an important part, too. Still, it is only part. The person who plays music or listens to it is a citizen; the part of the American pattern that has to do with government shapes his life, and he and the millions of other voters are responsible for making government good or bad. He may be a parent with duties toward his children that shape his life. How he performs those duties not only molds the lives of his children: it may help to change the way American parents think and act. By being an employer or employee he is part of our economic pattern, which shapes him in ways that are all too easy to see. He

can help change it by signing a union contract or going on strike. In everything we do, we are guided by the American pattern, and at the same time we affect the pattern not only where it touches us, but as a whole, for it is a living thing and a change in any part means changes all through it.

Sometimes it seems that the American pattern is out of joint. We see people who do not or cannot do their share well in it, and we see many (sad to say) who never have much chance to fit in. But if we know that, so far as a thing like the art of music is concerned, knowledge and the will to use it make a difference in what people are able to become, what reason is there to think that so many misfits and failures are necessary?

Before that part of our pattern which is a life of music could be taught, it had to be understood. What do we know about the larger pattern of living that will be of use to us? Now is the time to brace yourself against a bit of disappointment. For the answer is that we do not know nearly as much as we should; and much that we need to know is going to be very hard and costly to learn, and harder still to put to use. Many of us may be unwilling to trust this knowledge when we have it, and still more may be unwilling to show their belief by putting the knowledge to work.

Yet there is a cheerful side to the story, too, for already a great deal is known both from the experience of the past and from the newer scientific knowl-

edge of the present. Even though precious little use is being made of this knowledge as yet, it is waiting for us when we make up our minds to take advantage of it.

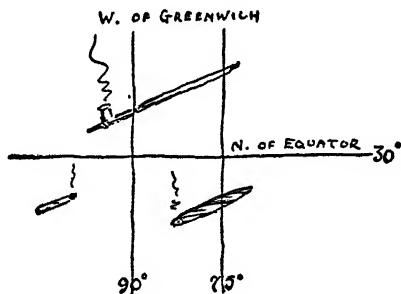
The first thing to understand is that our patterns of living today have their roots deep in the past. Ever since mankind began to make things like flint tools that do not rot away, and leave them around for us to find and piece together from the fragments the continued story of the ages, we know that ways of life have been changing. Especially since the time when man first began to write about himself, do we know this. Much that he has written was wrong, and some of it was lies, but even the mistakes and lies of people help us to understand them if we keep our wits about us. And happily for us—and for them—many of the finest and truest things about people in the past have been kept for us in history. Many of these things, the wrong and the good, as well, we not only know but use today. What we have and do, on land and sea, in church and countinghouse, barnyard and dining room, comes to us from the past.

“Nonsense,” you may say, as you reach for a cigar, made last week in Factory No. —, District of —, U.S.A., tax paid, and turned out by an automatic machine from filler grown in Kentucky and wrapper grown under shade in Connecticut. You may light it with your electric lighter, or with a modern safety match before you continue: “This cigar is fresh and modern. So is everything in my home—strictly mod-

ern and up to the minute. The past is dead and out of date. Skip it!"

The person who expresses these ideas is forgetting that the wise men of Europe and Asia never knew of cigars or tobacco until they met the Indians—"sucking on firebrands rolled out of the leaves of a plant which they grow." These first smokers seen by white men lived in the islands about Cuba, where tobacco with large leaves and delicate flavor grows easily, and where the air is moist enough to keep cigars in good condition.

In Mexico, where the air is dry and tobacco crumbly, the Indians had the corn husk, which they used for many purposes we use paper for. In North

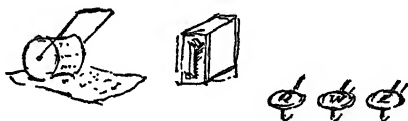


America, tobacco was scarce—so scarce that it often had to be mixed with other leaves, aromatic bark, etc. Neither cigars nor cigarettes, but the pipe was used here. Then as now this was the poor man's smoke, or

the smoke for the man who could not get the fine tobacco from the islands.

Because the Spaniards moved into these islands, and took over Mexico, they became the world's great cigar and cigarette smokers, while the English, who took the land north of Mexico, took with it the habit of using the pipe. The past is not as dead as one might think. Even the safety match and the cigar lighter are merely late developments in a long, long story that began when men learned how to tame fire and put it to work for them. If we forgot all that had been learned before the match factory was built, I doubt if we should be enjoying matches very long.

This typewriter before me seems new, and it is the latest model, smooth and silent. It is certainly very different from the rattling old Franklin writing machine on which my eight-year-old fingers picked out the date of the year 1900. But it is really old enough to make your head swim; it began centuries ago when



the Buddhist monks of China, tired perhaps of mumbling, began to try mass production of prayers by stamping them onto tablets of soft clay. From some such beginning, as simple as a boy stamping his foot

in wet sand, grew movable type and all of the modern, marvelous art of printing.

Yes, you live as you do because men in the past changed their ways to make the ways which shape Americans of today. Often the changes were slow. The farmers of China and Egypt, and what used to be Ethiopia, use the same tools, grow much the same plants, and handle their land as their fathers before them did for tens of centuries. Their way of life seems hard to us; it is hard; but it works after a fashion, and they have kept it. I doubt whether they keep it much longer, however, for sometimes change comes rapidly, and we are living in such a time.

CHAPTER XII

THE AMERICAN PATTERN



COMPARED with China and the countries around the Mediterranean, the United States is new and shiny. We feel somehow that it ought to run much more smoothly because it is so new. Yet pretty regularly, from the country's beginning, each generation has had one of those terrific social headaches known as a panic or depression. Almost every generation has lived to take part in a war, and one of those wars nearly tore the country asunder.

The last one consumed treasure—not only money,

but the more precious treasure of crop-growing soil and the minerals underneath—beyond counting, and has left scars still raw after twenty years' time.

To put it another way, there are flaws and defects in the American pattern of living, in spite of its many good qualities. And every human being in America is a part of that pattern of living. One great purpose of training in the home and education in the schools is to fit us more closely into that pattern.

Yet our institutions for the mentally ill are full of people who fitted so badly that we have had to put them away, for their good and for ours. And no one can say that we others who have not been put away as dangerous, always fit smoothly into the part we have to play.

But training and education have another purpose beyond preparing people to fit in. Every man, woman, and child who has lived in this world has made it different from what it would have been without him. Each one, as he lives, helps change in some small measure the pattern of living for all. Often the efforts of one are offset by the errors of another. Yet, add together the small changes made by 130,000,000, and there are times when you get real progress—or tragic backsliding. And so, whether we realize it or not, one great purpose of education in home and school is to turn out people who, by their living, will help make this country better instead of worse, since change it they must.

Many of us, knowing that our ways of living have

been shaped by past centuries of human effort, insist that most of our difficulty comes from trying to change what our fathers found to be good. Many, on the other hand, are impatient with the past and urge us to sweep it all away, to make a fresh start.

To add to our difficulties, many of those who wish no change have prospered because of the old ways, while many who wish to begin anew have not got from life the things they wanted. Most of us, however, are somewhere between these two extremes, just as most are between short and tall.

Is the wisdom and experience of the older days no longer sufficient for our guidance? If it truly is not, why can't we throw it all away?

Actually, much that is old is good and true and useful. Remember that the man who rides the transport plane or hangs on the straps of the subway is still physically the same animal who once killed his game with clubs and stones, tore it apart with his hands, and probably ate it raw. The human body has its own wisdom which works out in our daily ways of living in the home, on the street or farm or shop.

It is just as effective now as it was ages ago when man was struggling with the other animals for his ruling place on earth. Science does not deny this ancient wisdom. Science shows doctors how to aid its working, and teaches the rest of us how to give it a chance to keep us healthy. And so it seems like good sense not to throw away the old unless we know very well what we are doing.

After the French Revolution, when old ways suddenly became very unfashionable, the surgeons of France stopped burning wounds with hot irons or treating them with strong wine and spirits. Such practices seemed like mere superstition. But suddenly wounds began to fester and the injured died of gangrene, right and left. Eighty years later it was a Frenchman, Pasteur, who showed that fresh wounds become infected with bacteria, which the older surgeons had harshly destroyed with their hot iron and alcohol. Again, the rush of everyone to eat fine white bread made from the new patent flours, and to toss away the old coarse whole-wheat breads of their fathers, is one reason why two generations in Europe and America have been cursed with rotten teeth. Old ways are not always bad ways, by any means.

Yet the old ways are not enough, unless we view them in the light of modern science. Now science is at once a new way of looking at the world and a new means of doing the world's work. It is moreover, the most powerful and rapid means of changing man's world that has ever existed.

Though the great tree of scientific knowledge has its roots deep in the past, most of modern science is just the age of the American nation. Oxygen was discovered at the beginning of the American Revolution. In that single discovery were born modern chemistry and modern physiology. More than any nation before us, we have done our work and changed the landscape on which we live, with the aid of science.

Yet curiously enough, and naturally enough too when you think about it, the generations that have put science to work have lived largely according to old patterns which existed in the days before science began to change our equipment for living.

Science has been applied to the making of things: tools, like the harvester, comforts like the electric fan, mechanical servants like the steam engine and vacuum cleaner, aids such as modern bridges and elevators. We have designed these things to make the mechanical side of our lives more pleasant, convenient and efficient. But we have not tried, until very recently, to use science for examining such matters as employment, banking, marriage, government, and the distribution of necessities. Only the science of medicine has really been put to work at finding out how we could live more wisely.

Meanwhile, science has changed the world of everyday affairs so rapidly that our ways of living, however good they may once have been, no longer work as they ought.

Less than a lifetime ago counties had to be small enough for any farmer to drive his team to the county seat, visit the courthouse to pay his taxes or give his testimony as a witness, and drive back home the same evening. Everything had to be planned for travel at the rate of something like eight miles per hour or less. Today one rides from Cleveland to New York in the two hours it took the farmer to get from home to the courthouse. And the farmer himself, using a car, now

makes the old trip to town in about twenty minutes, or less if he is in a hurry.

Because we live according to the older pattern, which was new and good in its day, the state of Ohio (for example) maintains some eighty-odd courthouses, county seats, and sets of county officials. Today, with the telephone and rapid transit and business machines which science has provided, twenty could do the state's work and do it well.

But because all our living is in patterns, the change would amount to a good deal more than finding new work for some sixty sets of county officials. Businesses and highways, libraries, churches and school systems, real estate values and local sentiment have all been built up as part of the picture. People have been taught to expect and depend upon these things in eighty-odd towns and would be outraged if they were removed overnight from some sixty of them, no matter how wise that change would prove to be in the end.

If we were to make a scientific plan for Ohio today, as our fathers really tried to do about 1800, we should probably have the twenty counties. We could also plan many other things to fit into a different pattern of life from that in Ohio in 1800. We could plan to save and protect the untold wealth represented by the forests, and keep the streams clear and pure. We could build homes and towns that were sturdy and sanitary. We could plan our highways and factories with respect to the work of the future. We would, or

at least we could, look at the problem through the eyes of science while we used the strong arm of scientific technology to do the work.

Because we cannot ruthlessly proceed to do this now, it seems sometimes as though we cannot find a way to use science for this most important work of planning and reshaping our ways of living. Certainly we cannot use it as we might in a land untouched by human hands. We must recognize how the older ways have shaped the lives and the desires of our fellows, and respect their rights, even while we try to change America's ways for the better.

To replan and reshape our ways of living, we must broaden our scientific view until it takes in our fellow men, their ways and their wishes, as well as what may be best for them in the long run. We must study a world that has been lived in, not a world that can be shaped from the beginning. We have used science freely to do the work of our hands. We must now use it to help us understand and control the world we have made.

CHAPTER XIII

SCIENCE SHAPES THE NEW WORLD



THE monthly bill for your new automobile is on the table before you. Three radios are going at once. An airplane hums overhead. The telephone rings. The forgotten electric iron is scorching a rayon undergarment. You reach for a tablet of salicylate—
aspirin to you—and go to the electric icebox for a cold glass of something to wash it down. No one needs to tell you that science, though it may have put ten servants into your home, has not yet solved all of your problems.

You still have your troubles, and many of them are

as old as man. Most of them, of course, are mere personal annoyances which almost amount to a luxury. We must have something to grumble about, or life would be like the weather in some tropical islands—too perfect to be interesting.

But our land is full of troubles about which we cannot be so flippant; and they seem strangely unnecessary. Work needs to be done, yet men are idle. Farmers grow too much to sell, yet others are hungry. We have the finest physicians in the world; yet many of them do not get enough practice, while thousands of people go without the medical care they need. Factories produce at a small fraction of their capacity, yet even full capacity could not supply all that is needed. It all seems crazy when you write it down on paper and look at it.

Many of the difficulties with our ways of living are blamed on science. Certainly science is changing the American pattern so swiftly and profoundly that many people are crushed or discarded. But, to understand our troubles and see what may be done about them, we have to look first into the way in which science and life mingle, and act upon one another to produce change.

Science, we believe, is born in the laboratory under the watchful eyes of wizards in white coats whose wives have to remind them to stop working and eat a bite now and then. This may be partly true. But most scientific ideas are born in the busy workshops and marketplaces, on farms and ships at sea, where men encounter the tough problems of reality. From

places where the practical business of feeding, clothing, and caring for mankind goes on, the ideas are carried into the laboratory to be nursed until they are strong enough to be put to work.

Thereafter they must serve mankind, not in any new, mysterious way, but through the usual channels of manufacture, commerce, industry, and professional life. The discoveries may be very good, but if they cannot be made to pay someone, that is the last the common man is likely to hear of them. Benjamin Franklin invented the lightning rod; but it was the salesman with his waxed mustache and shiny hair, driving around in his rubber-tired buggy, who put lightning rods on all of the barns in this part of Christendom. If need arose, he might even make use of a little light romance with the farmer's daughter, just as cars are now sold with the aid of the farmer's shapely granddaughter in her one-piece bathing suit.

Science has been supported and applied largely along those lines in which it returns the most handsome profit. This means that it has been used out of all proportion to the real needs of men, in devising and producing the things for which people will pay cash, like the fine white flour which helped spoil the teeth of so many millions. The willingness of people to pay for things is not always a measure of how much they need them—as you quickly find by watching the concessions at an amusement park or county fair.

So it happens that we have secured from science the most remarkably clever results along some lines and very few results along others. Take war, for ex-

ample. Wars of conquest, however we sugar them, are really business enterprises. The soldier represents an investment. His health is an asset, injury and disease a liability. As a result, the first really serious wholesale attention to medicine and surgery was in the field where it touched the royal or imperial pocketbook—in military circles.

Or take the matter of ventilation and lighting. If these are not satisfactory for school children, no one can read that fact in a balance sheet. But when factory production drops because men keel over at their work from bad air, or because women cannot see what they are stitching, science is called into action. Thereafter the improvements worked out for factories may seep into the schools, but it takes a good deal of prodding of school boards by salesmen, contractors, and others—all looking for profits—to get them there. It is so much easier to paddle the kids for restlessness and ill temper than to look for causes of their misbehavior.

Modern chemistry was born from the study of gases, and that study began with bad air—not in homes and schools where, God knows, there was plenty of it—but in mines and factories where it interfered with profits.

Many men who sense these things, blame all of our ills on the profit motive. Whether they are right or wrong, no people in the modern world sees any practical way to get on without this motive for a long time to come; so we shall do better if we are scientific about profit, too. It is one part of the picture we must reckon with and shape as best we can.

The existence of the profit motive need not keep us from knowing that there are many very important values which cannot be measured by it. That fact is enough, if we really understand it, to make matters much better than they are today, and to insure the use of science where it will do the most good. The world may owe some of its troubles to the desire of men for profits; but it owes many more to the fact that the customers who pay the bills are asleep on their very important job.

It is well to remember too that a scientific product—for instance, the automobile or the electric light—may have an influence in a great many ways that no one ever thought much about. These inventions, born largely of the profit motive, and certainly made available on that basis, produce effects in fields where profit is not directly involved, or cannot be measured.

The automobile has put our homes on wheels and, aided by other scientific inventions, stretched our neighborhoods until they reach across the country. The electric light has stretched out the working and playing day until it takes a very hardheaded person indeed to get the rest he needs. Eventually the results may be put into figures—accident and death rates, higher taxes for roads, greater numbers of people with nervous disorders and heart trouble, even an increased divorce rate, perhaps.

Sometimes we can spot the cause, sometimes it is hidden. We generally wind up by blaming science when the real difficulty lies with ourselves—in the way

we use science for some things, and not for others. Science is quite as useful in studying the effects of an invention on human life and human society as in making the invention in the first place, but we have paid no attention to that fact until recently, and have neglected to apply scientific methods to the study of human relations.

Aroused finally by the number of deaths from automobiles, amounting to more in a single year than all of the Americans killed in a year of the World War, we at last have turned our attention to a scientific study of automobile accidents and their prevention. The result has been a sharp decline in accidents through more scientific traffic control, legislation, and psychological work with drivers. This is but one sample of what is possible if we use science, not merely for the creation of profits, but for the betterment of human relations and human living.

CHAPTER XIV

SCIENCE, SLAVE OR TYRANT?

HUNGER and homelessness, nakedness and filth —these things are terrible. Yet they do exist, and it is absurd that they do.



For the earth belongs to man. No one knows how long it was in becoming fit for him to live upon. Probably, if he had appeared upon it millions of years earlier than he did, he could not have survived. At least the familiar animals and the plentiful cereals and fruits upon which he now depends were not here then. All of these and every other living thing, not to forget the rocks, the air, and the waters as well, he has turned to his own uses.

He has wasted and destroyed past belief. From a

field laid bare of its cover of plants by the plow or by fire, one rainstorm may wash away the inch of soil that has been three hundred years in the building. Man's ax and saw have laid low great forests of trees which were big when Columbus sailed the Atlantic. Game and wild life have been ruthlessly removed. Clear streams and rivers have been fouled, and mines stripped before their time. Yet the earth is still rich with its abundance. There can be enough for all if we make it our first business, by properly husbanding these riches, to see that there shall be.

Here in the United States we have about two billion acres of land and most of the raw materials we need for life in the modern world. Tin, rubber, coffee, and certain rare metals we have to import. But in exchange we have phosphates and much else that the rest of the world must have. Some of our riches—in particular our oil and our soil—we are using up faster than we have any business to. But it is not yet too late to take matters in hand, so that our children and our children's children shall not be in want.

There are now about one hundred and thirty million people in this country. In 1800 there were about five million. One hundred years later there were about seventy-five million. If the population kept on increasing at this rate, we could expect over three hundred and seventy-five million—more than a third of a billion—in the year 2000. We should be pretty crowded. Even so, with about six acres to a person, we should have more elbowroom than little Japan

has today, with no more than two acres apiece for her citizens. But unless we were willing to work as hard as the Japanese we should be much worse off than they are. By no means all of our land is productive.

Since 1920, however, our birth rate has been declining rapidly. According to some authorities, our school population will never be as great again as it has been in the 1930's. It is expected that in another twenty years we shall taper off with a more or less fixed population of around one hundred and fifty million. Perhaps this will give us a chance to put things in order.

Until recently we have acted as if there were to be no end of new people, and no end of new land for them when they came. The free land gave out almost a generation ago, and we are just realizing that it is gone.

So we can count on having, in 1958, about twelve acres apiece, including mountains and deserts. On twelve acres of rich valley land a good gardener can feed a family of five or six. But it may take twelve hundred acres in eastern Colorado to keep that same family going. Feeding ourselves will take some careful planning as time moves on. And we shall have to learn once more to hate wastefulness, and call it a sin, as our grandparents did before us.

If we do, let us look sharp lest our new thrift become a cloak for the miserable stinginess and selfish advantage which the old hatred of waste sometimes concealed. The new thrift will have but one excuse—

a greater abundance of good things for all, and for all time.

The burden upon science will become not less but greater. Scientists will be pressed to develop new tricks, new gadgets, new short cuts to make today easier, regardless of tomorrow. That is how, so far, we have been using science. It has been like drinking liquor to make today pleasant without regard to the headache which comes in the morning. The pressure to use science in this way will have to be resisted by us all, for the future is everybody's business.

From now on, science can no longer be left to the wizard in the white coat and to the man who wants to make a profit from his inventions. These men still have work to do, and may so long as time goes on. But there is more important work afoot—a new kind of invention and discovery. And in this new work every one of us must play his part.

We must turn our genius and our brains toward the study of ourselves and our ways of getting on together. We must invent arrangements which will free the spirit of man and spread around the good we already have. This is a much tougher job than the fashionable one of inventing new machines and new chemical processes. It means working with the most complicated and difficult material of all—the human being and his ways of living with his fellow men.

It is true that marvelous scientific discoveries have come from places with as little freedom as the dark old

Russia of the Czars. The old kind of work could be done if a scientist had a place, tools, and the time to use them. But the new kind of scientific discovery can only come about in a society of free minds, where all understand what is going on, and where each helps as he can. Not all can be inventors, but all must have the spirit of the inventor, and back him in his efforts.

Does this sound impossible and foreign to our way of living? Deep in the foundation of our laws and customs are two great principles, often misunderstood and abused, yet cherished through the centuries. One is the dignity and worth of the individual. The other is the supreme importance of the interests of the group when these conflict with the selfish interests of the individual.

The new science of mankind will be harnessed to bring to each person a share of the common good. It will be used to insure that no selfish individual, for his immediate advantage, shall endanger the future good of others. This idea is as American as the United States and far older. The Founding Fathers stated the principle, and we have tried imperfectly to practice it since.

We put up with all sorts of inconvenience and expense in bringing known criminals to trial, just to protect the occasional innocent man who is accused. Our doctors are not allowed to kill off hopeless invalids, lest the privilege be abused and some individual be the victim of murder hiding within the law. On the other hand, the most cherished home-

stead may be condemned for highway purposes, or for a public building if the good of the community demands it. And in time of danger we throw our lives upon the altar of our country, well knowing that we as individuals shall never benefit.

We need no new system. What we need is a new and widespread understanding of the things necessary to the dignity of the individual, and a better knowledge on the part of all of the wrong we have been doing, by our misuse of science, to the future of the American people.

CHAPTER XV

I HAVE A JOB

HOMELESSNESS and hunger, nakedness and filth, as we have said, are horrible. But they are easier to endure than the thought of having those we love endure them. Men have willingly risked all these and worse evils for the sake of those who had little seeming claim to their affection.

Bread and beef, blankets and a fire are good. We must have them to live, but they are not enough. I have had friends die, the doctors assured me, simply because they did not consider it worth their effort to go on living. For the will to live is just as important as the physical things we live on. Hungry and ragged, the inspired armies of a great leader accomplish wonders. Though fed and clothed, mercenaries sold from their homes for service on foreign soil may fail because they have no heart for their task.

The United States will not have an easy time in seeing to it that all its people have enough of what they need. But that job can be done. We must find ways and means. The real danger we face is the lack of will to go on trying to live in the American way, respecting the rights of the individual, yet never letting them interfere with the good of the group.

The voter may become hopeless, and the man in

power become cynical, regarding those who have entrusted him with power. When that happens the "easy out" for both is to forget tomorrow and think only of today's advantage. We used to keep going by letting our histories tell us flattering lies about a past which, like most human enterprise, was a mixture of glory and of shame. Our politicians—and others—helped along by misleading us about the present, encouraging us to misunderstand ourselves and other peoples. There should be enough of the inquiring spirit of science abroad today to make these old tricks fall flat.



Meanwhile the deep and simple religious faith which sustained us in the past has been going through the torment of change into terms that the modern mind can understand. Angels with wings, flying end-

lessly about in a heaven far out in space, make little sense to a generation which knows that the wings of bats and birds are structurally the same as our arms, that there is no atmosphere away out in space, and no flying without air.

Each new age has seen the restatement of old faiths, and our own is no exception. As always when this happens, life seems bleak and barren for many. Yet time and again the essentials of religion are put into new words to fit a new day, and faith is not killed but revived. This will happen again.

So long, however, as democracies are not bound together by strong faith and conviction—by the belief that some things are worth living and dying for, if need be—they often make a poor showing beside countries ruled by faith that has the quality of religion (though it may not seem religious to us) or by force or a mixture of both faith and force. As one of our presidents who had a sense of humor said, it is necessary that each part of the country be absolutely free to decide for itself what it wants, yet very necessary, too, that all sections should decide to want the same thing! Repeatedly during the past twenty years the democratic countries, including our own, have fumbled and failed to move ahead on two of the world's most pressing and serious problems: peace and justice between nations, peace and employment within the nation.

What do we have that we can believe in and live for? Here we must, once more, search ourselves with

honest eyes, for belief can be the excuse for oppression, injustice, and outrage. We must, so far as is humanly possible, understand and weigh the thing we are going to believe in, before we surrender ourselves to it. We must look behind the noblest words, lest they be the means of deceiving ourselves and working injustice to others. "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" paved Europe for the heavy heel of Napoleon. "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" was made the excuse for giving to great and unscrupulous business combinations the rights of persons in the eyes of the law. And behind that privilege they wrought evil against the common good.

It is the hardest kind of work to make sure that we know what we are talking about and doing. It is much easier to say, "There goes a healthy man," than to take time, as a good doctor does, to feel the pulse, take the temperature, make a blood count, sound the chest, and analyze the urine of a patient. The doctor cannot afford to take a chance. Neither can we, when it comes to sizing up the things we wish to work and live for, and if necessary fight and die for. As the doctor must know his business, so must the citizen.

The citizen must understand this land and its people. It is not enough to believe that the land can be made a pleasant place, furnishing what is needed for a good level of living. He must make certain that the landscape is handled with the wisdom, respect, and skill to make these things come true.

He must understand and respect his fellow citizens, knowing that each is different from the rest, that each, as he lives, somehow changes the world he lives in. Whether these changes be for good or ill depends not merely upon something inborn, but upon the kind of experience and training each person receives as he grows and lives. Each must have what his body requires and what, beyond that, his dignity as a human being deserves.

One of the first requirements in an army is that each individual be able to keep his person and equipment in order—to look out for himself. The citizen, too, must know how to do the same. He must understand his body and its care so that he may keep it sound. But he needs also to know something of the reasons why minds and personalities become unhealthy and ill adjusted to the common pattern of living. He needs to know this, not only for his own sake, but because he is personally responsible for those who grow up about him, in the same way that we are all responsible for preventing the spread of measles and typhoid.

And he must know that he and his fellows are part of this great American pattern—our way of life. He must realize how it shapes us all, and how we in our turn can help to shape it. Remembering that no one of us leaves the world as he found it, the good American must have a passionate desire, tempered by kindness and humor, to leave it better instead of worse.

Knowing these things, no individual is helpless or

unworthy. He has his vote, of course. But he also has the right to express his belief and to take part in the activities of his group. That group may be the people who work in the same shop, or live in the same block. It may be the ward, city, state, or nation. But according to his gifts each has his voice and can make it heard. The voice of the nation is the voice of a man talking to his neighbor, multiplied by the millions of men and neighbors.

These should be the voices of friendly men. The American citizen should not be lost in the crowd.

END

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